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An aid to the Heidelberg
catechism

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AN AID

TO THE

Heidelberg Catechism.

BY

REV. OTTO THELEMANN,

DETMOLD, GERMANY.

TRANSLATED BY

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

It is with peculiar pleasure that this translation of Rev. Thelemann's excellent commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism* is offered to the American Churches. The time and labor required for the preparation of the translation are an offering of love to the symbol of faith which has been acknowledged as the flower of the Reformation period, and to the Reformed Church in the United States, in whose midst it still holds undisputed sway.

Thelemann's Commentary is believed to be a faithful representation of the doctrines and truths which constitute the heritage of the Reformed Churches, and to which most of these churches are still devoted in faithful allegiance and loyalty of heart. It is hoped that the translation may prove a blessing and an inspiration to a large number of pastors and members of the English-speaking Reformed Churches.

The doctrines of the Reformed Church have found wide acceptance in many lands, and they have been a tower of strength against tyrants and despots in Church and State. The type of doctrine which is characteristic of the Reformed Churches in all lands has been the means of making heroes and martyrs in the warfare of faith, and these truths, consecrated by the sufferings and blood of many faithful witnesses, are left

* Handreichung zum Heidelberger Katechismus für Prediger, Lehrer und Gemeindeglieder, von Otto Thelemann, V. D. M., Konsistorialrat in Detmold, zweite, durchgesehene und erweiterte Auflage. Detmold, 1892. Verlag von C. Schenk (M. Ihle).

to the Church as a priceless legacy. The Reformed Church will hold in undying remembrance the labors of Zwingli and Calvin, Frederick the Pious and his co-laborers, and of the host of those who have labored to establish the Church upon the immovable foundation of the pure Word of God.

A few of the passages quoted in the Commentary (from Ursinus and Olevianus), especially at the beginning of the volume, were omitted, because it was feared the work would become too large, and because they were accessible to English readers. But with these exceptions the quotations have been faithfully given.

Special acknowledgments are due to President Henry T. Spangler, of Ursinus College, for faithful assistance in revising the copy of the translation from month to month.

M. PETERS.

COLLEGEVILLE, PA.,

FEBRUARY 20, 1896.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

“ But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.” Eph. 4 : 15, 16.

For more than twenty years the wish has often been expressed to me, both by pastors and teachers, that I should prepare a practical exposition of the Heidelberg Catechism, the need of which has been sensibly felt. As I did not wish to lay down my work without fulfilling the promise which I had allowed myself to make at different times, and without rendering this service to my beloved Reformed Church, I have employed, during the last two years, such leisure as I could command in the midst of laborious official duties in working out this “Commentary.” It is intended to serve only as an aid, nothing more and nothing less. And any one who uses it, must decide for himself what will answer his purpose, the teacher for school instruction, the minister for catechetical instruction and for sermons on the catechism. I have also kept in mind our Reformed candidates for the ministry who do not come in contact with the Heidelberg Catechism at the university, as well as the members of the Church who desire to inform themselves more fully as to what is

Reformed in doctrine and practice, and how both these are grounded in the Word of God. I trust especially that the book may be of service to brethren scattered here and there in building themselves up in knowledge and in true piety, which can not be done by temporarily exciting the feelings, but consists in establishing one's faith upon the only ground of our salvation, just as in building one stone is joined to another.

Only a few words with reference to the plan of the book.

The text of the questions and answers is based upon that of the first edition of the catechism published in 1563, adapted in its phraseology to modern modes of speech, as is done in the editions prepared for the schools of to-day.

The questions are followed by an explanation of special words and expressions, a short statement of the contents of the answer and an analysis of the text in the form of questions and answers.

The end kept in view in the explanations is to set forth both the substance of the doctrines of the catechism and their biblical foundations. The earlier custom of arranging comments in the form of questions and answers has not been followed, nor have I wrought them out in the form of ready-made outlines for catechizing, as many might desire; but they follow the line of thought of the questions of the catechism. It will not be difficult for each teacher to work out his own outlines, a work from which he must not shrink if he wishes to enter into the inner spirit of the catechism. Under some of the questions special hints are given for their explanation.

The proof texts cited include nearly all of those used in the earliest editions, and are limited to the most important points, in order that as far as possible they may be printed in full. Only familiar or lengthy

passages are abbreviated. For the correct understanding of the passages cited, explanations are frequently added, and, after the manner of the earliest editions of the catechism, the literal rendering of important passages is also given (with the remark, "rendered literally"). Appropriate illustrations from Biblical history are indicated at important points, while numerous citations from Reformed Church history are introduced.

It is hoped that the numerous quotations from the writings of Ursinus and Olevianus, Calvin and other Reformed teachers, as well as from Luther and the ancient Church fathers, will prove an acceptable addition to the book. As I stand in the fullest and most perfect accord, both from conviction and experience, with the authors of the catechism, Ursinus and Olevianus, in relation to the creed of the Church, reformed according to God's Word, so my explanations of the catechism are true to the spirit and sense of their work, as is proved by the quotations from their Latin and German writings. I cite these, however, chiefly because the authors of the catechism are naturally the best, and have not yet been surpassed as, interpreters of the same. At the same time the selections develop more fully the brief explanations which I have given, and will serve to restore to the Church the rich inheritance which it possesses in the writings of these men.

As the introduction sets forth the characteristics, and contains a synopsis, of the catechism, so the appendix furnishes a history of the same and a guide for its use.

May the Lord cause His blessing to attend this exposition to the instruction and edification of His Reformed Church, as it seemeth good in His sight.

Detmold, Oct. 18, 1887.

O. THELEMANN.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

The first edition of this book has enjoyed the signal favor of God, and has been accorded a very friendly reception. It has been extensively reviewed by the newspapers of Germany and of other countries (Holland, Bohemia, Hungary, Switzerland, North America, Cape Colony), and I have received many personal letters of approval. In the second edition no important changes have been made, except that Question 44 has been rewritten, and the explanation of several doctrinal points has been extended.

May the Lord, to whose service the book is dedicated, preside over its destinies as it again goes forth, and bless it wherever it may be used.

Detmold, October, 1891.

O. T.

INTRODUCTION.

Outline and Structure of the Catechism.

A Christian catechism is a book of instruction in the doctrines pertaining to the truths of salvation in the form of conferences between teacher and scholar.* Ursinus defines it as follows: "A Christian catechism is a brief and clear explanation of Christian doctrine, adapted to the intellectual capacity of the uninstructed, drawn from the writings of the prophets and apostles, and divided into definite questions and answers."

In the preface to his Geneva Catechism, which in part was made the basis of the Heidelberg Catechism, Calvin says: "In the Church careful provision has always been made for the proper instruction of children in Christian doctrine. To facilitate the work, not only were schools established in earlier days and every one commanded to instruct his household, but it has also become a custom to question the children publicly in the church on the points of doctrine which all Christians hold in common and with which they must be familiar. To make this work systematic, a prescribed form has been prepared, called catechism or instruction." In the dedication of his catechism "to the faithful ministers who preach the pure doctrine of the Gospel in East Friesland," he writes (1545): "It would not only be desirable that perfect unanimity as to the doctrines of salvation should prevail everywhere, but also that all Churches should use the same catechism. But as for various reasons it can scarcely ever be expected that every Church should be willing to give up its particular form, there is no use in dis-

* The word "catechism" is derived from the Greek word meaning "to sound back," the root of which is "echo," resound, and means, "to instruct, to teach."

puting about the matter. Only let the diversity in the instruction be sufficiently guarded, that we all may be led to the one Christ, and being bound to one another by His truth, may be united into one body and in one spirit, so that we shall proclaim with united voice the cardinal doctrines of the faith."

Although the wish of Calvin was only approximately attained, its fulfillment was most nearly reached by means of the Heidelberg Catechism, which was accepted as a book of instruction for youth, not only in all German-speaking Reformed churches (outside of Germany, especially in German Switzerland, and later in North America) and in the churches of the Netherlands, but in the Reformed Synod of Dort (1618) it also received the sanction of the Reformed churches of all lands. And it may be truly said that the Geneva Catechism is surpassed by the Heidelberg, although the latter is based upon the former.

The answers of our catechism, by means of which the contents of the faith are set forth, based altogether upon the Word of God, presuppose a believing and experienced Christian. While on the one hand catechumens must be repeatedly cautioned against applying to themselves without further consideration every answer expressed in the first person, yet on the other hand this form is best adapted to lead the children to the knowledge and experience of faith and to confirm them therein. This method reaches not only the understanding, but also the heart. And many of the answers may very easily be changed into prayers. In this way the catechism combines the devotional element with its instruction. It is not a popularized system of dogmatics, but a thoroughly practical book for the people, resting upon the Word of God, which is adapted to bring them to the ripest knowledge and experience, and yet may be easily understood by every one.

In the outline the five so-called principal parts form the main heads. The order in which they stand is determined by the practical order in which they come forward in the experiences of the Christian life. The parts of Luther's Catechism are as follows: 1. The Ten Commandments, 2. The Creed, 3. The Lord's Prayer, 4. The Sacraments. In the Geneva Catechism Calvin follows this order: 1. The Creed, 2. The Ten Commandments, 3. Prayer, 4. The Word of God, 5. The Sacraments. The arrangement of the Heidelberg Catechism is the simplest: 1. Sin, 2. Deliverance, 3. Thankfulness. The Creed and the Sacraments are treated under the second head; the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer under the third head. The first part is intended to bring about a knowledge of sin and a desire for salvation. With fine perception Christ's summary of the law is made the basis and not the decalogue with its ten individual commandments. In the second part, in connection with the Apostles' Creed, an exposition is given of the facts of redemption in their objective and subjective significance, to which is added the doctrine of the sacraments, by which the faith that is wrought through the proclamation of salvation is confirmed. The third part treats of the Ten Commandments and of prayer, through which the life of faith becomes manifest, exercises itself and grows. The subject of repentance or the conversion of man, as the beginning of the new life, is very properly assigned to this part, after the doctrine of the knowledge of sin, faith and justification has been treated. From the standpoint of completeness it might be considered an omission that the doctrine of the Word of God has not been given a place as in Calvin's Catechism. But the authors evidently considered it unnecessary to give an exposition under a special head of the nature and authority of the

Word of God, which is not only set forth as the ground and rule of Christian faith and life in the body of the catechism (Questions 19, 21, 65, 91), but is also the indispensable foundation of it. A tree that is green and bears fruit, itself gives proof of the soundness of its roots, and a house that defies all storms, itself gives proof of the firmness of its foundation.

The structure of the catechism becomes apparent from the following outline, in which use is made of the old division into Lord's Days.

OUTLINE.

I. LORD'S DAY. Man's only comfort, and how we may become partakers of the same. (Q. 1-2.)

THE FIRST PART.

Of the Misery of Man.

II. LORD'S DAY. We learn to know our misery from the law of God, which is comprehended in the law of love, which, however, we are by nature not able to keep. (Q. 3-5.)

III. LORD'S DAY. God is not the cause of this misery, but our first parents Adam and Eve, through whose fall the whole human family has become totally depraved. (Q. 6-8.)

IV. LORD'S DAY. Therefore God justly requires that His law be kept, and justly punishes the transgressions of the same both temporally and eternally; and His justice cannot be set aside by His mercy. (Q. 9-11.)

THE SECOND PART.

Of Man's Deliverance.

V. LORD'S DAY. The justice of God must therefore be satisfied. This we neither can do ourselves, nor can

any other creature do it for us, but He only who is very God and very man and perfectly righteous. (Q. 12-15.)

VI. LORD'S DAY. That He may take the punishment upon Himself, He must be very man; that He may bear the burden of it, He must be very God; this Mediator is Jesus Christ, as is declared by the Gospel under the Old and New Covenant. (Q. 16-19.)

VII. LORD'S DAY. In Him we become righteous only by true faith, the chief articles of which are comprehended in our Catholic, undoubted Christian faith. (Q. 20-23.)

VIII. LORD'S DAY. This confession of faith is divided into three parts, and is a confession of the Triune God. (Q. 24-25.)

Of God the Father.

IX. LORD'S DAY. Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is also my God and my Father. (Q. 26.)

X. LORD'S DAY. By His Providence God upholds and governs the world, on account of which I may find comfort in every circumstance of life. (Q. 27-28.)

Of God the Son

XI. LORD'S DAY. Jesus is our only and complete Savior. (Q. 29-30.)

XII. LORD'S DAY. Jesus is the Christ, *i. e.*, He is anointed to be our Prophet, Priest and King. True Christians are also anointed, and as His members have a part in the threefold office of Christ. (Q. 31-32.)

XIII. LORD'S DAY. Jesus is God's only begotten Son, because He is God of God and my Lord, because He has purchased me with His blood to be His own property. (Q. 33-34.)

XIV. LORD'S DAY. He is the sinless Son of Man, because He was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born

of the Virgin Mary, and has thereby delivered us from the sin in which we were born. (Q. 35-36.)

XV. LORD'S DAY. As the only propitiatory sacrifice, He sustained in body and soul the wrath of God against the sins of mankind; innocently, as certified by His gentile judge; on the cross, to assure us that He has taken on Him the curse which lay on us. (Q. 37-39.)

XVI. LORD'S DAY. It was necessary for Christ to suffer death that He might satisfy for our sins; that He was really dead, is certified by His burial. Through His death our temporal death has become a passage into eternal life, and we receive power to die unto sin in this life. All fear of hell, which we deserved on account of our sins, He has taken away from us. (Q. 40-44.)

XVII. LORD'S DAY. The resurrection of Christ gives us the victory over death in its three forms: bodily, spiritual and eternal. (Q. 45.)

XVIII. LORD'S DAY. Christ ascended bodily into heaven, and yet with His spirit He is present with His own everywhere and at all times without the separation of the two natures in Christ; His glorified body in heaven and His spirit on earth are a pledge of our salvation. (Q. 46-49.)

XIX. LORD'S DAY. His exaltation as our Head is of profit to us, His members, whom He will make partakers of His heavenly glory by the resurrection of the body and the establishment of His kingdom when He will come again to judge the world. (Q. 50-52.)

Of God the Holy Ghost.

XX. LORD'S DAY. The Holy Ghost is true God and accomplishes our salvation. (Q. 53.)

XXI. LORD'S DAY. The Holy Ghost gathers the elect into the Church of Christ from the beginning

unto the end of the world. All the sanctified in Christ become partakers of His gifts in the Church through the Holy Ghost, and are assured of the forgiveness of their sins. (Q. 54-56.)

XXII. LORD'S DAY. After the souls of believers have been immediately taken up to Christ in death, the body will again be raised in glory, and reunited with the soul, will attain to the enjoyment of perfect salvation, the beginning of which we already experience in this life. (Q. 57-58.)

XXIII. LORD'S DAY. By faith I am righteous before God, notwithstanding the sin in which I was born and which still cleaves to me; but not on account of the worthiness of my faith. (Q. 59-61.)

XXIV. LORD'S DAY. Although good works which proceed from faith do not merit anything in the sight of God, yet God has graciously promised to reward them. This doctrine does not make men careless, but rather careful. (Q. 62-64.)

Of the Holy Sacraments.

XXV. LORD'S DAY. By the use of the sacraments the Holy Ghost confirms the faith wrought through the Word of God. They are signs and seals of the grace secured for us by the sacrifice of Christ. Christ has instituted only two sacraments, holy baptism and the holy supper. (Q. 65-68.)

Of Holy Baptism.

XXVI. LORD'S DAY. Baptism reminds us of and seals to us the cleansing of the soul from sin by the blood of Christ and renewal by the Holy Ghost, of which the words of Christ and His apostles assure us. (Q. 69-71.)

XXVII. LORD'S DAY. Not by water, but by the blood and spirit of Christ the soul is cleansed from sin

in baptism ; and children are also to be received into the covenant of grace by the seal of baptism. (Q. 72-74.)

Of the Holy Supper.

XXVIII. LORD'S DAY. In the holy supper the blessing of the sacrifice of Christ is assured and sealed to us ; it rests upon the command and promise of Christ to believers. By partaking of it in faith, we are spiritually united with the Godhead and the humanity of the glorified Christ, as He Himself and His apostles testify. (Q. 75-77.)

XXIX. LORD'S DAY. The bread and the wine are not changed (transubstantiation), nor does Christ unite Himself bodily with bread and wine (consubstantiation) ; and yet we become partakers of His body and blood, viz. through the operation of the Holy Ghost. (Q. 78-79.)

XXX. LORD'S DAY. The popish mass is a denial of the one sacrifice of Christ and an idolatry.

Only those who are truly sorrowful for their sins and who desire to become more holy are to come to the Lord's table ; those who declare themselves infidels and ungodly are to be excluded from it by the power of the keys. (Q. 80-82.)

XXXI. LORD'S DAY. By the power of the keys the kingdom of heaven is opened to believers and shut against unbelievers by the appointed officers of the church, according to the command of Christ, by the preaching of the Gospel and Christian discipline. (Q. 83-85.)

THE THIRD PART.

Of Thankfulness.

XXXII. LORD'S DAY. By our renewal into the image of God we are enabled, and in order to show our gratitude for the blessings of Christ it is our duty, to

do good works ; otherwise we cannot inherit the kingdom of God. (Q. 86-87.)

XXXIII. LORD'S DAY. The new life which manifests itself in doing good works has its beginning in conversion, which consists in the mortification of the old and the quickening of the new man. The rule by which we are to be governed in doing good works is the law of God, as contained in the Ten Commandments. (Q. 88-92.)

XXXIV. LORD'S DAY. The Ten Commandments are divided into two tables: Our duties toward God and toward our neighbor.

The first command treats of the majesty of God and forbids all idolatry, both gross and refined. (Q. 93-95.)

XXXV. LORD'S DAY. The second command treats of the being of God, and forbids all false worship of the true God. (Q. 96-98.)

XXXVI. LORD'S DAY. The third command relates to the name of God and forbids its misuse, especially by cursing and swearing, as gross sin. (Q. 99-100.)

XXXVII. LORD'S DAY. Yet Christians may take a lawful oath in the name of God. (Q. 101-102.)

XXXVIII. LORD'S DAY. The fourth command has reference to the Lord's Day, and commands us to hallow it by resting from earthly labor and by activity in heavenly things. (Q. 103.)

XXXIX. LORD'S DAY. The fifth command, with which the second table begins, refers to parents as those who are nearest to us among our fellowmen ; it commands us to show honor, love, fidelity, obedience and patience toward them and all in authority. (Q. 104.)

XL. LORD'S DAY. The sixth command forbids us to injure our neighbor in body or life, whether it be by gross or refined murder ; and commands us to love our neighbor, even our enemy. (Q. 105-107.)

XXI. LORD'S DAY. The seventh command forbids all unchastity, both in and out of wedlock, in thought, word and act. (Q. 108-109.)

XLII. LORD'S DAY. The eighth command forbids us to injure our neighbor in his property, either by trickery or by force, or under the appearance of right, and commands us to further our neighbor's prosperity in every lawful way. (Q. 110-111.)

XLIII. LORD'S DAY. The ninth command forbids all sins of the tongue against our neighbor. (Q. 112.)

XLIV. LORD'S DAY. The tenth command forbids every evil thought, first in our relations to our neighbor, secondly also in relation to all the commands of God; and teaches us that the lust which dwells in our flesh is really sinful in the sight of God.

Although even the holiest men cannot fully keep these commands, yet God requires them of us that we may more and more seek the forgiveness of our sins and strive earnestly to attain the goal of perfection. (Q. 113-115.)

Of Prayer.

XLV. LORD'S DAY. Prayer is the chief part of thankfulness. It will be heard only when it is addressed to the one true God and proceeds from an humble heart, and is offered in full reliance upon the promise of God. We are to pray for all spiritual and bodily needs, as the model prayer of our Lord teaches us. (Q. 116-119.)

XLVI. LORD'S DAY. The address, "Our Father," is to awaken in us childlike fear and trust, and the addition, "which art in heaven," is to remind us of the majesty of God. (Q. 120-121.)

XLVII. LORD'S DAY. The first petition: that the name of God may be hallowed in us and through us. (Q. 122.)

XLVIII. LORD'S DAY. The second petition: that God may rule us, establish His kingdom until the full

perfection of His kingdom shall take place in glory. (Q. 123.)

XLIX. LORD'S DAY. The third petition: that God would help us to renounce our own will and to joyfully obey His will. (Q. 124.)

L. LORD'S DAY. The fourth petition: for bodily needs, and for the blessing of God upon our labor. (Q. 125.)

LI. LORD'S DAY. The fifth petition: for the forgiveness of our sins and all evil that cleaves to us. (Q. 126.)

LII. LORD'S DAY. The sixth petition: for strength in the conflict with evil and with the evil one.

The conclusion of our prayer relates to the praise of God our King, who can and will give us all good. Such confidence is sealed by the word *amen*, *i. e.*, it shall truly and certainly be. (Q. 127-129.)

The excellence of the Heidelberg Catechism is not only attested by its general acceptance and use, but every age has furnished special acknowledgments of indebtedness to it and testimonials of its worth.

Two princes openly and publicly expressed allegiance to it. The pious Elector Frederick III. of the Palatinate, in his defence before the Emperor and the realm at the Diet of Augsburg, used the following words: "As far as my catechism is concerned, I am committed to it. It is fortified in the margin by proof texts from the Holy Scriptures to such an extent that it must stand immovable, and it is my hope that by the help of God it may continue so to stand."

The faithful King Frederick William I. of Prussia, in the regulations which he issued Nov. 9, 1717, gives the following direction: "That in all the evangelical

churches and schools of my dominions there shall be used and taught no other catechism than the Heidelberg Catechism, to which I myself hold allegiance."

The Synod of Dort (1618), representing the Reformed churches of all lands, approved and unanimously declared: "That the doctrine embraced in the Palatinate Catechism is in accordance with the Word of God, and that it contains nothing which on the ground of dissonance with the Word of God needs to be altered or amended, and that it is also an exceedingly correct hand-book of sound Christian doctrine, adapted with special skill not only to the capacity of youths, but also to adults."

Eminent theologians have given it their highest praise.

Henry Bullinger (d. 1575), antistes and successor of Zwingli at Zurich, wrote in 1563, soon after the appearance of the book: "The catechism of the illustrious Lord and Elector Frederick I have read with great interest, and in reading it I have heartily thanked God that the work which he commenced through Frederick has been crowned with success. The arrangement of the book is comprehensive, the doctrines are set forth in their purity and in accordance with the truth. Everything is clear and edifying. Its rich contents are put together in compact form. I am confident that no better catechism has made its appearance. God's name be praised for it. May He grant it abundant success."—David Pareus, Professor at Heidelberg (d. 1622), calls it a "golden book," and says that "it is the general opinion of pious persons that there could scarcely be another catechism prepared that is so firmly grounded upon the Word of God, so clearly arranged, so perfectly finished and so uniformly adapted to the intellectual capacity of adults and of youth, as is the Palatinate or Heidelberg Catechism."

The judgment of Henry Alting, Professor at Heidelberg and Groningen (d. 1644), was, "that the Heidelberg Catechism is at the same time milk for babes and strong meat for adults."—When the delegation of English Theologians returned home from the Synod of Dort, they said: "Our Reformed brethren on the continent have a small book, the Heidelberg Catechism, whose single leaves are worth more than tons of gold."

Although the catechism was attacked most bitterly by Lutheran Theologians when it first appeared, it nevertheless found recognition later even in these circles. Benthem (d. 1723), the Theologian of Lueneberg, writes as follows: "Excepting the peculiar doctrine of Calvin contained in it, I must confess that the boast of the Reformed is well founded, that Ursinus excelled himself in the preparation of the catechism as much as in all his other writings he excelled all their other theologians. The arrangement of the catechism under the three heads of Man's Misery, Deliverance and Thankfulness corresponds to the facts. The questions are well drawn up and the answers are clear, the proof texts are choice and the arrangement of divisions into Lord's Days is edifying."

Let us conclude with the testimony of two modern theologians. The judgment of Max Goebel (d. 1857) was as follows: "The Heidelberg Catechism may be regarded in the truest sense of the word as the flower and fruit of the entire German and French Reformation. It combines in it Lutheran fervor, Melancthonian clearness, Zwinglian simplicity and Calvinian fire." In the preface to the edition of the Heidelberg Catechism prepared in 1850 for St. Stephen's church in Bremen, Frederick Mallet (d. 1865) says: "No catechism has appeared since the time of the Reformation, which can be compared with the Heidelberg Catechism, either as to form or contents. It is a book

alike for the people and for the learned ; it is popular, as well as doctrinal. The scholar will find in it a presentation of the entire doctrinal system of the Evangelical Reformed Church. As a devotional book it is adapted both to the educated and uneducated, and shines with the light of divine truth upon the human heart and upon human life. At the same time this catechism is both polemical and irenical, a warrior and a peace maker. It so expresses the truth that falsehood appears clearly as falsehood, and that it is irreconcilable with the truth. At the same time it is so irenical, it so loves and seeks peace, and so mediates between those who agree on the main doctrines, that if it had not been for the pride and obstinacy of learned theologians and their imitators, it would have become long since the formula of concord of the entire Evangelical Church."

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The Heidelberg Catechism.

THE ONLY COMFORT.

Question 1.

What is thy only comfort in life and death?

ANSWER. That I with body and soul, both in life and death, am not my own, but belong unto my faithful Savior Jesus Christ, who with his precious blood hath fully satisfied for all my sins, and delivered me from all the power of the devil; and so preserves me that, without the will of my heavenly Father, not a hair can fall from my head; yea, that all things must be subservient to my salvation: and therefore, by his Holy Spirit, he also assures me of eternal life, and makes me sincerely willing and ready henceforth to live unto him.

I. IN WHAT TRUE COMFORT CONSISTS.

1. Man, ever since sin came into the world, and because of sin, is subject to the *miseries of life* (Gen. 3: 16-19; pain—grief—thorn and thistles—sweat of the brow), and to the terrors of death (Job 18: 14, the king of terrors; Heb. 2: 15, fear of death; Heb. 10: 27, a fearful looking for of judgment). So both *body* and *soul* suffer because they are bound together. The greatest misery is the *misery of sin*.

2. Over against all this, we need *comfort*, both in life and death. Gen. 5: 29, Isa. 38: 17, Ps. 25: 17, Ps. 116: 3.

3. Comfort is a calming, a stirring to life, a setting upright of soul, in which, however, we are sensible of the pains and needs of the body. Matt. 11: 28-30.

4. *False comfort* is sought:

a) In *riches* and *luxury*, Job 31: 24, the rich citizen, Luke 16, and the rich peasant, Luke 12.

b) In *health of body*. The common saying is, "Health is the most important thing." But "to-day red, to-morrow dead." Ps. 90: 6, they are like grass.

c) In *obstinacy*, Ps. 2: 3, Jonah 4: 9. An example is Agag, 1 Sam. 15: 32.

d) In *dissipation*, by worldly pleasures, amusements and drunkenness, 1 John 2: 17, Luke 6: 25, Isa. 22: 13, 14, Isa. 5: 22, 24, or in *frivolity*.

"I live, how long I know not;
I die, and when I know not;
I go, and where I know not;
And I wonder that yet I am happy."

e) In *other men*, as if they could dissipate anxiety and sorrow in any one. Job 16: 2 (miserable comforters), 2 Pet. 2: 17 (wells without water and clouds without rain).

5. But all these comforts fail to be permanent, or they only make the evil worse than before. *True comfort* must be *suitable* to all cases and *durable* for all time. There is *only one true* comfort, and it consists in this, "that I am not my own, but belong to *my faithful Savior*." Luke 10: 42 (the good part), Acts 4: 12, Haggai 2: 8, Christ is promised as the heathens' comfort. In Luke 2: 25 He is awaited as the comfort of Israel. "I am my own master" means the same as "I am my own slave." From this arises the slavery of sin. Rom. 6: 20 (servants of sin), 2 Pet. 2: 19 (servants of corruption). Cain was his own master, Gen. 4: 7, 8, 13. Esau also, Heb. 12: 17, and Saul, 1 Sam. 15: 19, 23; 31: 4. As long as I am my own and must rely on myself alone, I must provide for myself. Cares bring and increase trouble, but give no comfort. But if Christ is my Lord and I am His property, He therefore cares for me, and this stills all care and unrest, and gives the true comfort. 1 Pet. 2: 9,

Rom. 14: 8. See Mark 8, on the feeding of the four thousand. Luke 22: 35, John 10: 15.

II. UPON WHAT THE ONLY COMFORT RESTS.

Our only true comfort in Christ is grounded in this, that we rest unconditionally on His love and power, and expect from Him every good.

1. CARE.—For He has cared for me before I was born, in that He

a) With His precious blood hath *fully* satisfied for all my sins.

His “blood” is His whole life and death.

“Precious” means the same, because Christ is the most innocent and highest sacrifice. 1 Pet. 1: 18, 19.

“Perfectly” means that we can not or must not add anything to it, not even the very least. Heb. 9: 12.

“For all my sins” declare that no sin and no number of them is so great that the sacrifice of Christ is not sufficient for them.

“Satisfied” means that He has paid the ransom for me, and so blotted out the guilt of my sin. Col. 2: 14, 1 Pet. 2: 24.

b) Our only comfort rests on this, that He has delivered me from the power of the devil. Man through sin has become the servant of the devil. Through the deliverance from sin we became free from the power of the devil. 1 John 3: 8, 10, Eph. 2: 3, Rom. 6: 23, Heb. 2: 14, 15. (*Note.*—The word “devil” is repugnant to the world when it is confronted by the name in the Word of God or in the preaching of the same; while it often uses his name, and even curses and swears by it. There are three reasons for this. 1. Either they first of all hope to deny the existence of the devil. If so, they are like the ostrich which buries its head in the sand or in the bushes when the hunters are upon its heels and it cannot escape any more. And

then it thinks that the hunter cannot see him, because it cannot see the hunter ; and thus the stupid bird more easily becomes a prey of the hunter. 2. For they do not perceive and feel that through sin they are under the power of the devil. Of this the world is informed by one of her greatest prophets (Tit. 1 : 12), the poet Goethe, who says : “ The people never feel the devil even when he has caught them by the collar.” 3. Or the anger of the world (because Christians speak of the devil in holy earnestness and according to the Word of God) proves that they cannot endure it where their Lord (the Prince of this world, John 12 : 31, 16 : 11) is attacked. The Heidelberg Catechism, on the contrary, has from its beginning the Word of God in mind (Rev. 22 : 19), namely, that the whole Bible undeniably affirms the existence of the devil.)

“ Redeemed,” that is, ransomed, and therefore freed from the slavery of sin. In ancient times servants and slaves were ransomed, and so made free.

c) The comfort rests on this, that Christ satisfied for the guilt of my sins and ransomed me from the slavery of sin. Christ has acquired me as His own personal property. And no one or nothing can tear me, His rightful possession, away from Him.

2. PRESERVATION.—He also preserves me, in that

a) Without the will of my Heavenly Father not a hair can fall from my head. God is my Father through Jesus Christ, and the will of the Father is also the will of the Son. John 6 : 39, John 10 : 30.

“ *Hair of my Head.*”—The hair is the very smallest thing in the human body. We do not pay any attention if one falls out. Nevertheless it is said, “ The very hairs of your head are numbered.” Matt. 10 : 29–31. The preservation of the body is assured to us. Isa. 43 : 1–3, Mark 16 : 19. Examples, Daniel in the Lion’s den, Dan. 6 ; the men in the fiery fur-

nace, Dan. 3 (the hair of their heads was not singed) ; Paul and the viper, Acts 28 ; out of the mouth of the lion, 2 Tim. 4 : 17. If Christ cares for the preservation of our bodies with the greatest exactness, how much more does He care for my soul. John 10 : 28, 1 Cor. 1 : 8.

b) If nothing can happen to me without my Heavenly Father's will, then if at any time affliction of body and soul befalls me, it occurs in accordance with His will. Preservation then shows itself in this, that nothing can harm me, but rather all must be subservient to my salvation. Acts 14 : 22, James 1 : 12, Rom. 8 : 28. As examples, the guiding of Jacob, Gen. 32 : 10 ; of Joseph, Gen. 50 : 20 ; of David, Ps. 118 : 18, 21.

This gives a mighty comfort and a joyful courage.

3. ASSURANCE.—In order that I with firm confidence as a chosen child of God can make this only comfort my own, Christ gives the double assurance :

a) The inward witness of the Spirit. Self-made sentiments and imaginations cannot help me, the Holy Ghost alone can assure me of my salvation and of eternal life. If one has no certainty of his salvation in Christ, then he has no comfort. Rom. 8 : 9, 14, 16.

b) The strength for a new life, which we cannot have of ourselves, Christ Himself makes me "through His Holy Spirit willing and ready henceforth to live unto Him." To live according to the commandment of God and His honor, is then not a burden, but a delight. Matt. 7 : 21, Is. 40 : 29, Matt. 11, 30, Ps. 110 : 3. Therefore I am certain, through the only comfort, that I am not my own, but belong to Christ. In order to obtain this precious comfort, we can give up everything else, like the man with the hid treasure and the merchant with the pearl of great price. Matt. 13, Ps. 73 : 25, 26, Rom. 8 : 38, 39.

Question 2

How many things are necessary for thee to know, that thou, enjoying this comfort, mayest live and die happy?

Three; the first, how great my sins and miseries are; the second, how I may be delivered from all my sins and miseries; the third, how I shall express my gratitude to God for such deliverance.

The first answer is, as it were, an open gateway, through which we behold the glorious benefits, salvation and eternal life in Christ; which, as a treasure-house of God, the Catechism offers to us in a beautiful arrangement. The second question shows us the three steps by which we enter and share these gifts. The only comfort must become and *remain* your comfort, else it will profit you nothing if you merely know of it.

I. THE FIRST PART.

He that desires to be delivered from the misery of sin, must know, above all things, that he is held fast in misery, and that this is so great that neither he nor any other can help him out of it. A sick man that will not own that he is sick, will not ask for a physician nor take medicine. But sin is the most grievous disease, which ruins body and soul, temporally and eternally. The first part aims to awaken in us a desire for deliverance Matt. 9: 12, Jer. 3: 13. The prodigal son, Luke 15, when far from home and his father, sees most of all his misery. And he came to himself, but found fault not with others, but with himself.

II. THE SECOND PART.

Were we only to see how great our misery is, but not how we can be delivered, we would despair and be disheartened. Illustration—Cain, Gen. 4: 13. It is therefore necessary to know “that I have a Savior, who from the manger to the grave, yes, to the throne, where man gives Him honor, belongs to me a sinner.” This the second part teaches. A sick man who sees he is

sick, will not go to the very best physician, but to the one who is skilled in his profession, in whom he can place his confidence. John 17: 3, Matt. 11: 28, Luke 5: 17, Acts 4: 12. The woman who was a great sinner, Luke 7, permitted nothing to detain her from going to Christ, and then she found the forgiveness of her sins, although they had been very great.

III. THE THIRD PART.

Every kindness we have received deserves gratitude; and this makes us more attached to the benefactor. A physician we pay when we have become well, but it is impossible for us to pay God for the deliverance which is given us in Christ. However we can show ourselves grateful to Him by a new life. But this we know not of ourselves. Therefore it is necessary for us to learn how this is to be attained according to the commandments and prayer. Ps. 50: 14. The proper thank-offering. Rom. 12: 1, Col. 2: 7. The healed Samaritan, Luke 17, is to us an example of gratitude; the behavior of the nine lepers warns us against ingratitude. The one who was thankful was especially assured of his comfort. When we say that it is necessary to know, *i. e.*, to understand these three parts, we do not mean that this is to be done only with the head, but it must become a matter of the heart. John 13: 17, Ps. 50: 15.

IV. DIVISION OF THE CATECHISM.

✓ The three parts we find together in Rom. 7: 24, 25, “O *wretched man* that I am, who shall *deliver* me from the body of this death? I *thank God* through our Lord Jesus Christ.” The headings of the three parts of the Catechism are taken from this, while the division is based on the Epistle of the Romans in which the Apostle Paul treats of these three divisions. First he convinces the Jews and Gentiles that they are miserable

and condemned sinners. Chap. 1: 18—3: 21. Secondly he teaches redemption through Christ. Chap. 3: 21—11: 36. Thirdly he exhorts them to gratitude through a Christian life. Chap. 12: 1—16: 27.

Questions 1 and 2 are the introduction to the Catechism just. Chap. 1: 1—17 are to the Epistle to the Romans.

PART FIRST.

OF THE MISERY OF MAN.

THE LAW AND SIN.

Question 3.

Whence knowest thou thy misery?

Out of the law of God.

I. THE IMPORT OF THE WORD "MISERY."

The word "Elend" here translated misery originally carried with it the idea of "out of one country," "in a foreign land," and was formerly applied to what was considered the extremity of civil punishment, viz., banishment. "Misery" therefore indicated the unhappy condition of punitive separation from home and friends. In the time of the Reformation the original meaning of the word still prevailed. Luther translated Isa. 58: 7, They who are in "Elend" bring to thy house. The literal rendering would be: "The poor who are wandering," and thus poor travelers or wanderers. The Septuagint translates the expression, "Shelterless poor," *i. e.*, homeless.

2. That which is spoken of in the second question as "sin and misery" is treated in the third question under one head. Sin and its power (sinfulness) and their consequences, viz., guilt and punishment, are set forth. Sin is not merely human weakness; it is rather trans-

gression, evil-doing, an offence against God. Therefore sin is the greatest of all miseries, because it separates man from God and banishes him from His presence, and thereby makes him wretched in body and soul, in time and eternity. Isa. 59: 2. The first sin at once plunged man into misery, and banished him from Paradise (the dwelling place of God among men)—out to accursed ground. Sin developed with the first murder, and drove the first murderer, Cain, full of despair, into the land of Nod, *i. e.*, into banishment. And when a son was born to Seth, he named him, with a feeling of the deepest misery, Enos, *i. e.*, incurably sick. (The word Enos thus also signifies “man.”)

II. The Import of the Law of God.

1. A law is something established, a certain fixed order, to which one must conform. It demands obedience. All human law has its authority only through the divine economy. Where it contradicts that, the word of the apostle holds true, “We must obey God rather than men.” Acts 5: 29. The divine law on the contrary demands unconditional obedience, because God is the highest and the only infallible lawgiver.

2. God’s law is His revealed will, and directs us what to do and what to leave undone. It is, therefore, in the form of a command and prohibition. We must distinguish between the natural law of God or the conscience, and the revealed or written law of God found in the Scriptures.

a) Conscience is the innate consciousness in man of good and evil, right and wrong—a remnant from the school of Paradise, from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It is also called “God’s voice in the heart of man.” Rom. 2: 4–15. But as all the powers and capacities of the soul have become corrupt through sin, so in like manner the conscience is involved. Man

can, therefore, never attain to a knowledge of sin through conscience alone, since his conscience even often approves many things that God condemns (*e. g.*, to lie, when it does not work injury to another, or when it is of advantage to the person himself or to some one else; to purloin or to retain something—*i. e.*, to steal—when it is only of little value, or when the one to whom it belongs has an abundance of it). The conscience of the natural man is, therefore, unreliable. Rom. 2: 15. It needs to be regulated and quickened by the written law of God, just as a clock must constantly be regulated and set by the sun. There is an *erring* conscience, which is like the clock that runs and strikes the hour, but not correctly. There is a *slumbering* conscience, which is like the running clock that does not strike. By the “*good*” and “*evil* conscience” we understand the testimony of conscience that one has done well or ill. But the “good” conscience may also be an erratic one.

b) The written law of God, which is revealed to us in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is God’s revealed will, according to which we are to regulate our conduct, both in our actions and in avoiding things improper.

1. First of all in the Old Testament. John 1: 17, Micah 6: 8. The law in the old covenant is of a three-fold character—the moral or ethical, the ceremonial or ecclesiastical, and the state or civil law. The ceremonial law is comprehended in the directions about worship and the religious observances of the people of Israel; the civil law determines the political institutions and governs the judicial relations of the people. Both laws applied only to the people of Israel, and were intended also to bring them to a knowledge of sin. The former, through their sacrifices and ceremonial washings, testified to their uncleanness. Heb. 10:

3. The latter convicted them of disobedience and resistance to law in daily life. Both laws have been abolished in Christ; the ceremonial law through His sacrificial death and His high priestly office (Col. 2: 17, which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ, Heb. 10: 12, 26). The civil law has been abolished through His kingly office and through His heavenly reign, Matt. 28: 18-20, after the severest punishment of this law, the penalty of death, had been inflicted on the Son of God (John 19: 7, Deut. 21: 23), and after the Jewish state had been destroyed by the judgment of God. Of the ceremonial and civil law of Israel it may be said to be true that Christ is the end of the law. Rom. 10: 4.

The moral or ethical law, which is comprehended in the Ten Commandments, was the first law which God gave to Israel at Sinai as soon as they had come out of Egypt, and had become an organized community. Ex. 20, Deut. 5. It is still in force and is for all people, and for all times the foundation given of God of the moral order of the world. Matt. 5: 17, "Think not that I came to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil;" *i. e.*, not only to fulfil its demands in His active, and its punishments in His passive obedience, but He had also fulfilled the law in the sense that He made it more complete, and demands that in His kingdom there should be a more exact fulfilment than that to which the Jews were accustomed, and which was only directed to the letter.

2. The New Testament contains not only the gospel, but also the law of the new covenant. John 14: 15, John 13: 34, Gal. 6: 2, 1 Thess. 4: 3.

III. How to Attain to the Knowledge of Sin Through the Law of God.

God gave the law for a two-fold purpose. It is to lead, first of all, to the knowledge of our sin, and then to serve us as a guide to the new life which is well-

pleasing to God. For the latter purpose the law, *i. e.*, the Ten Commandments, is set forth explained in the third part of the Catechism (of “thankfulness”). Here, in the first part, we have to do with the law in the former sense. It is by bitter experience that we become acquainted with misery as evil, the consequence of sin; but we learn sin itself as misery only from the law of God. Rom. 3: 20. Here we are concerned not so much with the coarse outbreaks of sin and with single sins, but with the essence of sin and our sinfulness. Rom. 7: 7. By sin we understand all that is opposed to the holy will and law of God, whether it be in thought, word or deed. 1 John 3: 4. Sin is accordingly rebellion against the will of God and apostasy from God. We come to the knowledge of sin when we compare our whole life, in deeds and things avoided, in thought, word and deed with the demands of the divine law, and when we do not turn our eyes away from the odious picture, which confronts us as our own in this pure mirror; or when we are not like the man who beholdeth his natural face in a glass, and forthwith goeth his way and forgetteth what manner of man he was. James 1: 23, 24. Christ pointed the rich young man who asked him the way of salvation (Matt. 19), as well as the scribe who tempted him (Luke 10), to the law. But both of these had read the law only superficially, or else they could not have said: “All this have I kept.” We must know the far-reaching significance of the law if we would know the greatness of our sin.

Question 4.

What doth the law of God require of us?

Christ teacheth us that briefly. Matt. 22: 37–40. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first and the great command; and the second is like to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commands hang the whole law and the prophets.”

Unlike Luther's Catechism, which had already been published when the Heidelberg Catechism was composed, this does not set forth the Ten Commandments, but the summary of them given by Christ Himself as the means to bring about a knowledge of sin. The reason for this arrangement is not that the writers wished to change the order of the five principal points treated in both Catechisms, or because it was undesirable to introduce the Ten Commandments twice, in the first part as a mirror in which to discover the knowledge of sin, and then again in the third part as the rule of Christian life. The reasons manifestly lie deeper, and are to be found in the nature of the subject itself and in the purpose of the book.

1. The subject does not treat of the knowledge of individual sins in the sense of transgressions of particular commandments, but of the knowledge of sin, of the sinfulness and the lost condition of the natural man. This knowledge is far more easily attained by holding the Ten Commandments before us in the concentrated form of a summary like a mirror with intense reflection in a narrow compass. The source from which all true keeping of the law must proceed, and the goal which it strives to reach, is love. Do you love God perfectly and your neighbor as yourself? This question penetrates the inmost recesses of the soul, and over against it there is no escape as might perchance be attempted from one or another of the commandments. "Ye are to be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect." To this there is but one confession: I am not perfect, and I cannot become such of myself.

2. The other reason is found in the purpose of the Catechism, which is intended for youth, and is, therefore, a pedagogical one. One might not succeed in bringing a catechumen to a consciousness of utter sinfulness in regard to the seventh commandment (thou

shalt not commit adultery), or the tenth (thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife). On the contrary, love to parents, to kindred and to benefactors, with which the youth is familiar, presents a point of departure from which to bring him to recognize that he does not love God and his neighbor as he ought, and consequently does not keep the commandments of God as a whole.

Although Calvin in his Catechism treats the Apostles' Creed as his first point, yet the application which the Heidelberg Catechism makes of the law in the first part, is fully Calvinistic. Calvin says: "The purpose of the law is easily recognized. It teaches love—love to God and to the brethren. Love to one's self it does not teach. There is nothing in it that says what to do or what to avoid for the sake of ourselves. For even without a command we think first of ourselves, and in everything we care best for ourselves, if we become absorbed in love toward others. The commandments do not aim at particulars, but at the righteousness of our whole being. Let no one think that he can fulfil them by external acts. Whoever is not pervaded by love, and does not do everything out of love, breaks the law in every thought and act. But since no one has such love in himself, we all come short and are guilty before God. We stand in need of forgiveness, of a re-adoption through grace, of a love which is shed abroad in our hearts and which teaches us how to love. Thus the law points us to Christ."

Again, the summary of the divine law is divided into two commands. The first corresponds to the first table of the law (commandments 1-4), the second to the second table (commandments 5-10). Compare question 93. This summary we find already in the Pentateuch, and evidently in view of it the scribe who wished to tempt the Lord with his question (Matt. 22), made no reply (Deut. 6: 5, Lev. 19: 18).

I. The First and Greatest Commandment.

Loving God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength is to love Him above all else with full determination of purpose and with complete self-surrender,—with all the powers of heart, soul and mind. Love is not a mere sentimental feeling, but it embraces all the powers and faculties of man,—the understanding (knowledge), feeling (sensation) and willing (determination), and gives proof of itself in all the energies of body and soul. Therefore loving God means also: (a) That I recognize and honor Him as the highest good (for true love *rests* upon reverence), Ps. 73: 25; (b) that I long after Him continually (for this is the *disposition* of love), Ps. 27: 8; and rejoice in His presence (this is the *happiness* of love), Ps. 84: 3; (c) that I gladly and freely do His will (this is the *proof* of love), 1 John 5: 3, Acts 5: 29.

II. The Second Commandment, which is like unto the First.

1. To love your neighbor as yourself, *i. e.*, as if you were he, or as if you were in his place. The impure and sinful self-love (selfishness and egotism) of the natural man is hereby not recognized as good and justifiable. Against this is directed the demand of self-denial, without which love to one's neighbor is impossible. True self-love consists in this, that we seek our true well-being and eternal salvation. Eph. 5: 29. This feeling we should also have toward our neighbor, and we should be concerned for his eternal salvation and temporal well-being to the same degree as we are for our own, just as sincerely, constantly and actively as we are bound and inclined, according to the will of God, to love ourselves. We are not to say with Cain: "Am I my brother's keeper?" Gen. 4: 9. On the contrary, we are bound by what Paul writes in Philippians 2: 4—"Look not every man on his own things, but every

man also on the things of others ;” and by what Christ says in Matt. 7 : 12—“ Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them ;” and by the royal law as expressed in James 2 : 8—“ Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”

2. According to Scripture we distinguish in our love toward our fellow-men between (*a*) love of brother, (*b*) love of neighbor and (*c*) love of enemy.

a) Every Christian who through faith has become a living member of the body of Christ, is my brother. 1 Cor. 12 : 27, 1 Pet. 2 : 17. In 1 Cor. 13 : 4–7 the apostle depicts the essence of brotherly love. In Matt. 18 : 21, 22 we see how often we are to forgive our brother. Acts 2 : 44, 45 : They (the brethren, the first Christians) held all things in common. Also 1 John 3 : 16. Abraham gives an example of brotherly love in his conduct toward Lot. Gen. 13 : 8, 9.

b) Every person without reference to race or religion, is my neighbor ; and especially the one who stands in need of my help. In Luke 10, in the parable of the Good Samaritan, which sets forth an example of love of neighbor, Christ changes the question “ Who is my neighbor ?” into “ To whom art thou neighbor ?” Acts 17 : 26, Isa. 58 : 7, 2 Pet. 1 : 7.

c) Among our fellow-men an enemy stands farthest from us, but the same love is to be extended to him. An enemy is one who wishes me ill, who desires or does me evil. Matt. 5 : 44. Love toward one’s enemy does not manifest itself merely in not returning evil for evil, but in returning good for evil. Rom. 12 : 19–21. We have examples of love toward our enemies in our crucified Savior, and in Stephen. Luke 23 : 34, Acts 7 : 59.

III. The Sum of the Law is the Two Commandments.

1. The demand of the divine law is love. 1 Tim. 1 : 5. The fulfillment of the divine law, therefore, roots itself in love. Rom. 13 : 10.

2. God asks us to love Him, for His own sake ; because He is our Lord and God, our Creator and Benefactor with respect to body and soul. 1 John 4 : 19.

3. For God's sake we are to love our fellow-men. Levit. 19 : 18.

4. The two commandments are like each other : *a*) With reference to their *contents*, for both demand love ; *b*) with reference to their *importance*, for God demands the fulfillment of the one as of the other with equal emphasis ; *c*) because one cannot be fulfilled without the other.

5. The two commandments are unlike in their rank (the "first and the greatest," and the "other," *i. e.*, the second) : *a*) In respect to the *object* of love (God and man) ; *b*) in respect to the *measure* of love (above all things and as thyself) ; *c*) in respect to their *relation* to *each other* (because love towards one's neighbor springs only from love toward God).

6. Love toward God is the source of all true love toward one's neighbor, and love to one's neighbor is the test of love toward God. 1 John 4 : 19-21.

7. Upon these two commandments hangs the whole law which God gave through Moses and the prophets, through whom He preaches, interprets and inculcates the law. The demands of the law and the prophets are summarized in the two commandments. Upon these they hang, and their fulfillment moves in them like a door on its hinges.

Question 5.

Canst thou keep all these things perfectly ?

In no wise ; for I am prone by nature to hate God and my neighbor.

I. That I Cannot Keep the Law of God Perfectly.

How then do I come to the knowledge of sin ?

The law of God stands before me as a mirror. The

purpose is not to view the mirror, but myself in the mirror; not merely to become acquainted with the law, but to learn to know myself through it. In a mirror we see how we appear, clean or unclean. Speaking without a figure, it is our duty to compare with open eyes and with all earnestness, the entire man—his disposition and conduct, his thoughts, words, and deeds—with the whole law. Canst thou keep it all,—not single commands, but all the demands of the law,—perfectly; not merely here and there, but always and everywhere, and according to the measure in which God demands its fulfillment? And not merely, “Hast thou kept it?” but also, “Canst thou keep it?” Conscience, Scripture and experience answer: No! Rom. 2: 17, James 2: 10, 1 John 1: 8, Rom. 7: 18, 21. The image which, according to the comparison mentioned above, confronts us in the mirror, is not lovely and beautiful, but repulsive and wholly deformed through sin. Isa. 1: 5, 6. What great wretchedness, what depth of misery!

II. Why I Cannot Keep the Law of God Perfectly.

1. This comes from my being prone by nature to evil.

a) Evil did not first enter my heart in the progress of time, but it was already there when I was born; therefore, because we have not acquired it by practice, we cannot rid ourselves of it in the same way. And because the inclination to evil dwells in the heart by nature, it therefore exerts so great a power over it, and cannot be overcome and removed from it through one's own strength, which is already weakened by it.

b) If the inclination to evil resides by nature in the human heart, then no man is free from it, but this sinfulness extends to all men. Gen. 8: 21, Eph. 2: 3, Gen. 6: 5, Jer. 13: 23, Job 14: 4, Rom. 3: 10–12.

2. “I am prone by nature to hate God and my neighbor.” From this natural inclination arises our sinful

and corrupt condition, not from the outbreaks of sin, which are its natural effects and consequences. And the corruption is not to be measured by the coarseness or refinement of these outbreaks. The natural inclination of man is directed to the very opposite of what God demands of us in His law—love to God and man. And this antithesis the Catechism expresses in all its severity, “prone to hate God and neighbor.”

a) I am prone by nature to hate God. Love and hate are like two poles between which there is no mediation. According to man’s way of looking at it, indifference is indeed regarded as standing between them. But this is a deception. God as the *highest good* desires to be loved perfectly; this demand is His right, its fulfillment our duty. Indifference and lack of love toward Him are only lesser grades of hatred. With God only a decision for or against (ein entweder—oder) is recognized as valid according to the word of the Son of God. Matt. 12: 30. Further, he who does that which is against me, and which he knows is against me, will not indeed be able to say that he loves me. Accordingly he who loves sin, which is hateful to God, and loves the world, which hates Him, is allied to that which stands in hateful opposition to God, and of such an one it can be said that he hates God. 1 John 2: 15. The natural man bears within his heart a hatred against all that comes from God and belongs to God,—against the Son of God, in whom dwelleth the fullness of the Godhead bodily and in whom the greatest love of the Father is revealed, John 15: 23;—against God’s Word, and that not merely against the threatening of the law, but also against the proclamation of the saving Gospel, 1 Cor. 1: 23;—against God’s ways in His providence and government of the world, Ps. 78: 41; 14: 1;—against God’s children and servants, John 15: 18, 19; Luke 21: 17.

The reference, therefore, is not so much to the coarse outbreaks of open hatred against God, as they occur among those who have reached the extremity of infamy in blaspheming and cursing the name of God, as to the inner disinclination toward God's Being and Will. Thus it is antagonism and enmity against God. The essence of enmity can be characterized as nothing else but hatred. Even if the world and the flesh claim that they love God, it is only empty talk. For the God whom they pretend to love, is not the true and living God, who created man after His own image in true righteousness and holiness, but an idol which they create in their own thoughts, according to their own imaginations, and in which they love their own infirmities. It is not different with the idols of the heathen; theirs are coarse, but these are refined. But just in this their hatred against the true God manifests itself. Rom. 8 : 7, Ps. 45 : 8, Matt. 6 : 24, James 4 : 4, Isa. 59 : 2, Rom. 5 : 2, Col. 1 : 21.

b) I am prone by nature to hate my neighbor. From the same root of sinfulness from which springs outspoken hatred, arises also that relation toward our neighbor in which we love ourselves more than we love him, instead of loving him as we love ourselves. How universal this is, we learn from daily experiences with men and their principles. "Das Hemd ist mir näher als der Rock." ("Each one is neighbor to himself.") Where a so-called natural love is found, it is always very imperfect and lacks the only proper motive. One loves either for the sake of one's own pleasure, or on account of one's own advantage; thus ultimately one's self, or on account of one's self; whereas God wishes that we should love our neighbor for God's sake, *i. e.*, from obedience toward Him and according to the manner that is well-pleasing to Him. How little value is to be set on such natural love, we may conclude from

the ease and persistence with which it passes over into deadly hatred, as daily experience teaches us. He who knows his own heart, and whose eyes are open to penetrate the restless life of men, must coincide with the words: "I am prone by nature to hate my neighbor." Titus 3: 3. (The apostle Paul says this of himself and of the other Christians after their former conversation, although he could testify with reference to himself: "After the righteousness in the law I was blameless." Phil. 3: 6.) Rom. 1: 29—full of malice, hate, murder, dispute, says Paul of all the heathen. Also Gal. 5: 19, 20. Cain, the first son of the first parents, is an example of hatred against one's neighbor. Gen. 4: 5–8. And Abel had not given him the least cause for hatred. Lamech had great natural love—he had two wives—and yet he was a murderer. Gen. 4: 23. The sons of Jacob were envious of their brother Joseph; they hated and envied him who walked in love and obedience toward his father. Gen. 37: 14–28.

3. Thus I know how great my sins and miseries are.

OF MAN'S GUILT.

Question 6

Did God then create man so wicked and perverse?

By no means, but God created man good, and after his own image, in righteousness and true holiness, that he might rightly know God his creator, heartily love him, and live with him in eternal happiness, to glorify him and praise him.

I. How God Created Man.

1. If therefore man has not in the progress of his life learned to sin, but is sinful by nature, how then did evil originate in man's nature? Where shall we seek for the origin of sin? Man was not brought forth through any process of nature, nor was he developed

from a lower animal (*e. g.*, the ape), but God created him. Did God then plant evil in man? Would He consequently be the cause of sin and bear the guilt of our misery? Already the first sinners, Adam and Eve, sought to fasten the guilt of their sin upon others. Eve says, "the serpent deceived me," and Adam even wishes to throw the blame upon God, when he excuses himself, "the woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I did eat." And thus the words of the preacher continue to be verified that "God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions" (*i. e.*, subterfuges). Eccles. 7: 29.

2. The cause of evil cannot be in God, because He is the highest good; and God could not have created man evil, because He Himself is pure and holy. John 4: 24, Habbakkuk 1: 13, 1 Peter 1: 16, Ps. 92: 16, 1 John 1: 5, James 1: 16.

3. As God, according to the testimony of Scripture, created all things good, He also created man, not evil, but good, *i. e.*, endowed in body and soul with everything necessary to enable him to fulfil his destiny, the glorifying of God. Gen. 1: 31, Eccles. 7: 29. Man was created good and perfect in the sense that there was nothing faulty in him, but he was susceptible of development.

4. God exalted man above all other beings already through the manner of his creation.

a) God made man at the close of His creative work, in order to indicate thereby that he was the crown of the whole creation; *b)* while God in the creation of other things merely said, "let there be," or in the creation of living creatures "let the earth bring forth," He now says to Himself, "Let us make man," and formed, out of the dust of the ground itself, man's body; which, although like that of the animal, surpasses it by far in structure, and breathed into him the breath of life. Gen. 2: 7.

5. God created man not evil, but good ; He created him not perverse, but after His own image. By image we are to understand not a perfect identity, but an exact resemblance to the original. Gen. 1 : 26, 27.

6. By this creating man after His own likeness, God has raised him above all other created beings, and made him His child. 1 Cor. 15 : 49, Rom. 8 : 29, 2 Cor. 3 : 18.

7. The essential image of God in man consists in the immortal personal spirit which he has from God, and by which the nobly created body is also governed. Thus man was good in regard to his being, and like unto God in his moral nature, in the gifts which he had received, viz., true (real, complete) righteousness and holiness ; in addition to which (also after the image of God) dominion over the earth was conferred upon him.

8. Man was created in true righteousness and holiness, *i. e.*, with the inclination and power for good in disposition and conduct. He was, therefore, without sin and guilt, and in a state of innocence ; he loved, desired and did nothing except what was good, righteous, holy, acceptable and pleasing to God.

9. On this account all the spiritual powers of man, his understanding, feeling and will, were as the image of God, good and perfect. He could rightly know God, his Creator (understanding—knowledge) ; he could heartily love Him (feeling—love) ; he could live with Him in eternal happiness (will—life). This we may also learn from passages in the New Testament which refer to the renewal of the original image of God in man. Col. 3 : 10, Eph. 4 : 23, 24, Rom. 8 : 6.

10. According to Ursinus the image of God in man consisted : *a*) In the understanding, which could rightly know the being, will and works of God ; *b*) in the will, which obeyed God freely, in that all his inclinations,

desires and acts were in harmony with the will of God ;
c) in the spiritual and immortal nature of the soul, in the purity and spotlessness of the entire man, in complete happiness, in joy in God, in the dignity and sovereignty of man, by which he surpassed and governed the rest of creation.

11. With reference to his body, man was created in conditional immortality. He would be immortal as long as he remained in a state of innocence. He did not have to die. To show this we have the testimony of *a*) the translation of Enoch (Gen. 5 : 24 : While he walked with God, God took him and he was no more) ; and of Elijah (2 Kings 2 : 11, Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven) ; as well as the future translation of all believers who will be alive at the second coming of Christ. 1 Cor. 15 : 51, 1 Thess. 4 : 17.

b) The tree of life in Eden. Gen. 3 : 22.

c) The threatening of God. Gen. 2 : 17.

d) That mortality would be the first consequence of sin. Rom. 5 : 12, Rom. 6 : 23.

II. Why God Created Man After His Own Image.

The purpose and end for which God created man after His own image is likewise good ; to praise and glorify God, in all His manifestations, in word and deed, as the noblest creature, God's masterpiece—if one may so say. The honoring and glorifying of God is the purpose for which He created the whole world, and especially man. Prov. 16 : 4, Rom. 11 : 36. In praising and glorifying God, men should be like the angels, whose blissful occupation is such. Isa. 6 : 3, Ps. 148 : 2, Luke 2 : 13.

Question 7.

Whence, then, proceeds this depravity of human nature?

From the fall and disobedience of our first parents, Adam and Eve, in Paradise; hence our nature is become so corrupt, that we are all conceived and born in sin.

I. Whence Originates Man's Misery.

1. The sixth question has yielded the result that the evil and perverse inclination in the nature of man, *i. e.*, his corrupt nature, his misery, does not come from God, his Creator. The seventh question sets forth whence misery originates and who is chargeable with it.

2. Man created good, living in a state of innocence, capable of development, was endowed with freedom to choose good or evil. His development would have to take the one or the other direction. Because he was created good, he had at first by nature only an inclination toward the good, which in advance gave the weight of its influence against evil in the temptation in which he was to choose for himself. Obedience to the commandment, and the temptation which followed, therefore, did not exceed his powers as long as he lived in communion with God. According to his innate state of righteousness and holiness, we may say: "He was able not to sin;" and if he had continued in this state by overcoming the temptation, then it would have been said of him in his state of perseverance: "He was not able to sin."

3. This determination was brought about through the temptation. This was necessary, in order that man might declare himself through an act of free-will, either for good (for God) or for evil (against God). In the temptation we distinguish between the occasion of temptation and the tempter.

a) The occasion of the temptation was the tree of knowledge of good and evil; not that the tree or its

fruit could have had a peculiar quality to make man wise, but God, on account of the child-like state of our first parents, attached a command to it. He could not issue His command abstractly, on the basis of man's relation to God, and say, "Ye dare not hate me," for of such hatred they could not as yet have had any definite idea; or, "Ye dare not be disobedient to me;" they knew not, indeed, what disobedience was, and could not know it. God could only associate the command with the closest and simplest relations of man to nature, which impressed him externally and served him for his bodily sustenance. He forbade them to taste of the fruit of a tree which, to distinguish it from others, He named the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The tree was, because of the purpose for which it was used, a tree of knowledge, just in so far as it served as an instrument of that test; through which man, if he endured it, was to be brought to conscious good,—to the consciousness and knowledge of good, in the original doing of which he felt happy and stood in clear opposition to evil, the doing of which would lead him into the contrary condition, into misfortune and misery. It was not necessary, therefore, that man should first fall, in order to come to a knowledge of good and evil.

c) The tempter was the Devil (slanderer) or Satan (adversary), who used the serpent as his instrument. He was originally created a good angel by God, a spiritual being, but he fell away from God, and with him many angels, who also became evil spirits and subject to him. Matt. 4: 1, 3. (The first Adam was tempted in Paradise—the second Adam in the wilderness; both were tempted of the devil; the first succumbed—the second endured the temptation that he might overcome the devil for us.) Luke 22: 31, Eph. 6: 11, 1 Peter 5: 8, Rev. 12: 9, and 20: 2, John 8: 44, 2 Peter 2: 4, Eph. 6: 12.

4. Let us consider the Fall more closely as it is described in Gen. 3, not as an allegory (a figurative representation of a thought or of a mere internal process), but as a historical fact and an actual occurrence.

A—The Sin.

a) THE TEMPTATION. Gen. 3 : 1–5.

Verse 1.—The tempter, as a spiritual being and unknown by our first parents, chooses as his instrument the serpent, well known to men for its shrewdness. He first tries to confuse them with reference to God's word and command, to create doubt and uncertainty, by lyingly putting a false construction upon it. He first turns to the woman, not because she was created less good than man, but probably because she had not received the command directly from the mouth of God (Gen. 2 : 16, 17), and, therefore, might be more accessible to temptation after the manner devised by him.

Verses 2, 3.—God had not merely warned them against the actual sin ("do not eat thereof"), but also against the desire ("ye shall not touch it"). Eve shows by her answer that she well knows God's word and commandment, and what consequences would follow the transgression ("that ye may not die"), and thereby she at first resists the temptation, God's word sustaining her.

Verses 4, 5.—("Ye shall not surely die," *i. e.*, in no way, certainly not.) She should have turned away immediately from the tempter. By remaining, she enters already into relation with him, and he comes forth with the open, insolent lie: "Ye shall not die;" in direct contradiction to God's unmistakable statement: "Ye shall die." He, the liar, seeks thereby to represent God as a liar and to awaken at the same time mistrust, as if God were jealous and were keeping back

from man that which is highest and best. Man was like God in the sense that he was created in His image (Gen. 1 : 26), and he might have been satisfied with it. The tempter dazzled the eye of Eve with his flattering falsehood, and further assured her, as if in derision, that her eyes would be opened. At all events, he mixes with his lie a grain of truth, but which God had already told them, *viz.*, that they should learn from the tree what was good and evil. But to this knowledge they would have come through their obedience to God's command, and, in that event, without injury to themselves.

b) THE FALL. Verses 6-8.

Verse 6.—As soon as Eve lost sight of God's word and opened her ear to the tempter, she was lost ; she had no longer any support, and became the prey of the tempter. She fell away from God to the tempter, the devil, whom she believed rather than God. The entire development of sin comes forth instantly : 1) The evil desire which is excited in her by the sight of the forbidden fruit ; 2) the sinful act of taking and eating which grew out of it ; 3) the seduction to sin by which she involved also Adam in destruction.

Verse 7.—That they were naked, was neither injury, nor sin, nor shame to them ; for God had thus created them. But they transferred to the external the inner perception and feeling, *viz.*, that they had lost their holiness and righteousness through sin. Shame was the first indication of the agitation of conscience on account of sin. They sought an outward covering of leaves for their nakedness (their shame), since they were not able to cover the inner nakedness which had arisen. Thus after the first sin, there is revealed the consciousness of sin and the need of deliverance. Their eyes were opened, and now they were sorry for the deed.

Verse 8.—When Adam and Eve in the evening of the same day heard the voice of God in the garden, they hid themselves from the face of the Lord amongst the trees of the garden. This corresponds entirely with their child-like condition. The voice which at other times sounded so graciously in their ears, now fills them with fear. The cause for this lay not in the voice of God, but in the ears of man. Conscience accused them of their sin. Therefore they were ashamed and afraid of the appearance of their approaching God and Lord. Here also, as in the preceding covering with leaves, the hiding amongst the trees is the consequence and expression of an inner emotion. Dread of God takes the place of former fear of God, *i. e.*, the child-like obedience in which they were happy; instead of approaching God, they flee from God. Sin makes itself felt in them as misery.

B—The Judgment.

a) THE TRIAL. Verses 9–13.

Verses 9, 10.—Sin began with the temptation, judgment begins with the trial; not that God stood in need of such a process as does an earthly judge. Because of His righteousness He would not condemn man without a trial and without giving him an opportunity to defend himself, and for man's sake, that by the examination He might explicitly convict him of his sin. God summoned Adam first (not Eve) to judgment, because He had first given him the commandment, and he was the head of the woman (in a different sense from that in verse 16, when he becomes her lord). Adam was conscious of his inner and outer nakedness, but referred to the latter only as the ground or excuse for hiding himself, since this condition in which God created him could not be held in his opinion as culpable. But in reality the terror of the law, "thou shalt surely die," filled his body and soul.

Verse 11.—The omniscient God at once brings the sinner's refuge to naught : Thou didst eat of the tree and thereby hast transgressed my command. The Lord puts it in the form of a question, so that Adam in his answer would have to acknowledge and confess his sin.

Verse 12.—Before Adam confesses, "I ate," he seeks to excuse himself and to cast the blame on his wife, who had led him astray. Impliedly he would make God, who had given the woman to be with him, responsible for his eating. But the penalty had been announced to him with the command ; therefore his excuse is vain.

Verse 13.—Also the woman, before she confesses, "I ate," seeks to excuse herself on the ground of temptation, even as the man did on the ground of having been misled. She acknowledges now that the serpent deceived her. She became wise through the misfortune.

b) THE SENTENCE. Verses 14–19.

Verses 14, 15 ("above all the cattle of the field," *i. e.*, more than the other animals, which, Rom. 8 : 20–22, are also involved in the ruin of their lord, Adam).—God began in His sentence with the author of the sin, the tempter. He does not challenge the serpent, the animal, the instrument, with a question, the means by which He had brought Adam and Eve to the knowledge and acknowledgment of their sin. At the same time He recognizes the accusation of the woman against the serpent as well founded, although without excuse for Eve, and pronounces the curse upon the reptile ; in a wider sense, also upon him whose instrument it was. The serpent, in being made to crawl in the dust of the earth, became the lowest and most despised of all creatures. Not only man, but also animals, have a natural abhorrence of this reptile. Enmity is put between the serpent and the woman, and between their seed. The

serpent can only be destroyed by bruising its head, and it bruises the heel of him who so treads upon it. But as that curse upon the serpent has less significance for the animal than for our first parents (who are to be reminded continually of their Fall by the creeping serpent), far more does the second part of the sentence apply to them. It is to awaken in them a comforting hope of deliverance. (The protevangelium, *i. e.*, the first proclamation of the future Redeemer.) The Seed of the woman will come, who will destroy (bruise the head) the power of him who tempts and occasions sin, *i. e.*, the devil (the "old serpent," Rev. 12 : 9), who in return will cause His death (will bruise His heel). (This has been fulfilled through Christ's suffering and death on the cross.)

From the tempter God turns to the woman, who led the man astray. Eve receives bodily and spiritual punishment : *a*) pain of body (and in the most sacred sphere of the woman. In Christ the curse has been transformed into a blessing, 1 Tim. 2 : 14, 15) ; and *b*) entire dependence upon the man (desire for him and subjection to his will. In Christ this relation has been sanctified, Eph. 5 : 28).

Verses 17-19.—God turns now to him who had been led astray, but to whom, however, belongs the greatest accountability. God reminds him of this by recalling the command which had been directly given to him. Instead of obeying the holy will of God, Adam had yielded to the will of the woman, which had become sinful. With this calling to mind of the commandment, the revelation of the divine will, God replies at the same time to the excuse of Adam, which by implication had been directed against God Himself (verse 12). The punishment for Adam is also a bodily one (he being appointed to the laborious tilling of the ground cursed for his sake, whose fruit he had to eat instead

of the fruit of Paradise), and a spiritual one (affliction and vexation of soul, every misery of life). Upon him who had received the threatening of the law in behalf of himself and of his wife, is now pronounced the heaviest part of the sentence for him and his wife—death. Man, who had become sinful, now becomes mortal. Death is implanted as a germ in his flesh, and has descended upon all his posterity; the consequence is the final disintegration of body, which we call death in a narrower sense. The word of God, “The day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die,” is not fulfilled in the sense, on that day thou wilt become dust, but thou wilt be subject to death. This does not reduce the poignancy of the threat which had been pronounced, as man did not know, but could only anticipate, what death is. How God meant it in the beginning, we learn from His own interpretation of this sentence (misery, toil and distress until his turning to dust). The whole life of man, corrupt through sin with all its misery, is to be called death. From the day of our birth and with each new day’s increased growth in life, we are ripening for death. And the end is, we turn to earth. Rom. 5: 12, Rom. 6: 3.

5. Through sin the devil obtained power over the sinner. He thereby becomes subject to the authority of the devil, to which the first question of the Catechism already referred. In his pride man wished to become like God; in reality he became the servant of the devil, since he subjected himself to his will. John 8: 44, Heb. 2: 14, 15.

6. The Fall, which involved apostasy from God, and subjection to the dominion of sin and the devil, and disobedience, which expressed itself in resistance to divine authority, out of which the Fall originated and in which it was actually accomplished,—both had their own consequences for Adam and Eve.

a) Loss of the Image of God.—This was true thus far, that in the fall they lost their original holiness and righteousness (the divine gifts of grace), and their dominion over the earthly creation came to an end (enmity between the serpent and other animals, thorns and thistles). The essential image of God, *i. e.*, the immortal personal spirit, was left to man, but it was clouded by sin. Man became neither wood nor stone (Stock und Stein), nor animal, nor devil (the substance or essence of whose being is evil, or sin); but he remained man in his being, even if entirely permeated by sin.

b) Sinfulness.—Sin was not a solitary act; but it clung to man with its fascination, and left its traces upon all his work; so that he, who before was only inclined to good, was henceforth prone to all evil.

c) Mortality.—Only with God (Question 6) could man live in eternal happiness. Since he was now separated from God through sin, he was driven out of Paradise, that he might not eat of the tree of life, and live forever. Mortality refers primarily to bodily, temporal death. With this, however, is most closely connected spiritual and eternal death. The punishment of temporal death was at the same time tempered by God's mercy, else the reign of sin would be eternal.

II. How the Misery of Sin Has Come Upon Us.

1. But what have we to do with the fall of Adam and Eve? Very much. For the consequences of it extended beyond Adam and Eve to all their posterity without exception. Sin did not, it is true, become the essential nature of man, *i. e.*, his real being; but his nature was most deeply corrupted thereby. Human nature became tainted; as the poison, when it enters the body, passes into the blood and poisons it, without being assimilated by the blood, or the blood ceasing to

be blood, and finally produces death ; in the same way the first sin operated upon the being, the nature of our first parents. And because the generation (birth) of a man is not an original creative act on the part of God, but the propagation and communication of man's own being, and because this being is sinful, we have all (since we are descended from Adam) been conceived and born in sin ; and thus the sinful nature is our own from the first moment of our existence. In Gen. 5 : 3 the same expressions that were used by God at the creation of man, are applied to the first father, Adam, at the birth of a son. As the image of God consisted in man's original holiness and righteousness, so the image of Adam was reflected in implanted and inborn sinfulness.

2. The first sin is the mother of all the sins of the whole world, and its origin is typical of the genesis of all other sins. James 1 : 13-15. The first sin embraces already the three cardinal sins (1 John 2 : 16) : the lust of the eyes—the tree, “pleasant to the eyes” ; the lust of the flesh—“good for food” ; the pride of life—“to be like God” (Gen. 3 : 5, 6). In a three-fold temptation, corresponding to this one, the second Adam, Christ, gained the victory ; lust of the flesh—“bread” ; lust of the eyes—“pinnacle of the temple” ; pride of life—“all the kingdoms of the world” (Matt. 4).

3. We distinguish original, or inherited, sin and actual sins, or sins of commission.

A) ORIGINAL SIN is the natural inclination inherited by all men. Rom. 5 : 12, Ps. 51 : 5.

B) ACTUAL SINS are the several sins which arise from original sin (inherited sinfulness). Actual does not here stand in antithesis to “apparent,” but it refers to what has been done, to what is set in motion, and is practised. James 1 : 15.

a) *Known Sins and Sins of Ignorance*.—The former are those which we know to be sins ; the latter are such as we either do not know to be sins, or do not acknowledge as such. Ps. 32 : 5, Ps. 40 : 12, Ps. 19 : 13, 1 Cor. 4 : 4.

b) *Sins in thought, word and deed* are such as are committed in thinking, in speech, or in conduct. Matt. 15 : 19, 20, 12 : 36. “ But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof in the day of judgment” (idle not in the sense of vain and superfluous, but, as the literal expression is, “evil,” causing offence). Eph. 4 : 29, 5 : 4, Gal. 5 : 19–21.

c) *Sins of Commission (Transgressions) and of Omission*.—The former are such as we incur when we disregard a prohibition ; the latter, when we neglect a command. Hosea 6 : 7, James 4 : 17, Luke 10.

d) *Intentional Sins and Sins of Weakness*.—The former are such as are recognized beforehand as sins, and are committed with deliberation ; the latter are those which are committed thoughtlessly, with rashness, or when the struggle against temptation is relaxed in the heart. The former are not excusable, on the ground that one has had perchance a good purpose in view (Rom. 3 : 8), or was compelled by necessity (lie of necessity) ; nor the latter, on the ground that the necessary strength to resist was not at hand. The contrary is proved by Ps. 141 : 1, 34 : 7, Isa. 40 : 29–31, 65 : 24, Luke 18 : 7, 8. An example of the so-called “Nothluege,” lie of necessity, is found in the life of Abraham when he passed off his wife Sarah in Egypt and Gerar for his sister, but was delivered by God, and put to shame by the heathen princes. Gen. 12 and 20. Intentional sins were committed by the brothers of Joseph when they sold him and deceived their father, Gen. 37 ; and by Judas, when he betrayed the Lord,

Matt. 26 : 15. Noah, when he drank to excess through ignorance of the effect of wine, Gen. 9 : 21 ; and Peter, when he denied the Lord, Mark 14 : 66-72, sinned through weakness.

e) *One's Own and Others' Sins.*—The former are those which a man commits himself ; the latter are the sins of others, of which one becomes a guilty participant by taking pleasure in them, or by assisting to perpetrate them, or by acquiescing in them, either expressly or by silence. Heb. 7 : 27, Levit. 5 : 1, 1 Tim. 5 : 22.

f) *The sin against the Holy Ghost*, or blaspheming the Holy Ghost, which alone of all sins will neither in this world, nor in the future, be forgiven ; or the sin unto death, upon which eternal damnation irrevocably rests, is the willful and wicked forsaking, as well as the malicious persecution, of apprehended and experienced divine truth. Matt. 12 : 31, Mark 3 : 29, 1 John 5 : 16, Heb. 6 : 4-6.

Question 8.

Are we then so corrupt that we are wholly incapable of doing any good, and inclined to all wickedness ?

Indeed we are, except we are regenerated by the Spirit of God.

I. How Deeply Corrupt Human Nature is.

1. The seventh Question taught us the origin of sin, and the extension of sinfulness to the whole human race. The eighth Question points us to the greatness and depth of our misery. Is there then no power of any sort left in man that he might do good and resist evil ? To this holy Scripture answers with an emphatic no. John 3 : 6, Rom. 8 : 7, Eph. 2 : 5, Rom. 7 : 14, Matt. 7 : 16, Gen. 8 : 21.

a) The natural man cannot know the good. What he finds agreeable and calls good is capricious. He makes his own moral law for himself, which is not in harmony with the law of God. 2 Cor. 3 : 5.

b) He is not able to will the good, because sin dominates him, and he is alienated from God. Eph. 2 : 3, Rom. 6 : 16.

c) He yields his members servants to sin. Rom. 6 : 19, Ps. 10 : 7, Isa. 59 : 3, 7, 8.

2. But is it not the case that the natural man does some good and abstains from evil ; *e. g.*, in helping the poor and in the practise of temperance and moderation, etc. ? Such externally good works lack the true motive, love to God, and the proper aim, the glory of God. They may have as their basis a sort of natural benevolence, or tenderness of feeling. One may do good and abstain from evil out of ambition, or for the sake of material advantage, or through fear of punishment, shame or injury. Of such the word of the apostle is true, Rom. 14 : 23, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin" ; Heb. 11 : 6, "Without faith it is impossible to please God."

Evidence of the depth and greatness of man's corruption is found in the history of paganism (Rom. 1), and of Judaism, and of the entire strata of degenerate Christianity.

4. The knowledge of the greatness of our corruption [that we are, *a*) incapable, *i. e.*, powerless, unadapted to any (*i. e.*, any whatsoever) good ; and *b*) inclined, *i. e.*, capable, adapted, and willing, to all evil] tends to bring us, 1, to humility and distrust of ourselves ; and 2, to the desire for deliverance from this great misery. Rom. 7 : 24. For man, before he comes to a knowledge of his totally corrupt state, has no desire for deliverance.

II. How Long Man Remains in this Corrupt Condition.

Man abides in his native state of total depravity until the end of his life, if a change does not take place in his life. Such a change does not ensue from a

so-called reformation, emanating from the man himself. For the outward putting off of single sins and misdeeds does not help toward a thorough renewal of one's own heart. For this the natural man lacks the power. Such pretended reformation is in reality only a deception, and furnishes food for self-righteousness and self-complacency. Jer. 13 : 23, Isa. 57 : 10, 12, Rev. 3 : 17.

2. Just as little is education, or culture and the refinement of man's spirit, able to deliver him from the misery of sin. The Duke of Wellington justly said that there is a possibility of a mere education of the head making refined devils. Matt. 7 : 17. One may fasten good fruit to the branches of a tree, but this is not the fruit of the tree, nor the outgrowth of its life. One might lop off its branches and trim it, and dig about it and dung it ; but the wild apple tree still bears only fruit after its kind. The defect is in the sap. A noble scion must be engrafted upon the wild tree, in order that a new and an entirely different sap, and a noble nature, may be brought to it. The principle of this new life cannot be another human spirit, just as degenerate ; but it can only be the Holy Spirit of God. Man cannot be helped psychically (a word of quality having reference to the spirit of man), but only spiritually (by the Spirit of God). It is the Spirit of God that quickeneth ; the flesh (even that which is refined, developed, informed) profiteth nothing. Therefore man remains, with all his intellectual culture, without the Spirit of God, spiritually dead. He remains incapable of any good and inclined to all evil so long as he has not been regenerated by the Spirit of God. John 3 : 5. Let us take another example for our contemplation. If a coin were lost upon the street and trodden under foot, not only would it become soiled ; but the image of the king, which is stamped upon it, would in many cases

be defaced beyond recognition. This cannot be restored by merely cleansing the coin. But it must again be smelted in furnace heat, and the image of the king must be stamped upon it anew. This takes place in man, in whom the image of God is defaced through sin, in regeneration. Matt. 3 : 11, Mal. 3 : 2, 3.

3. Regeneration is God's work of grace. Just as little as man can conceive and bring forth himself, so little can he regenerate and bring himself into the kingdom of God. Regeneration is a work of God, wrought by the Holy Ghost. Ezek. 11 : 19, 2 Cor. 5 : 17. Regeneration, *i. e.*, the birth of the new man in the image of the Son of God, is a work of divine grace. Phil. 2 : 13, John 3 : 8, Rom. 8 : 29.

Question 9.

Does not God then do injustice to man by requiring from him, in his law, that which he cannot perform ?

Not at all ; for God made man capable of performing it ; but man, by the instigation of the devil, and his own wilful disobedience, deprived himself and all his posterity of those divine gifts.

I. God Has a Right to Demand of Man the Fulfillment of the Law.

Some one (in reply to Question 8) might say : How can I help that it is impossible for me to keep the law of God ? Why did not God create me better ? But God did originally create man in righteousness and holiness (see Question 6), capable of keeping the law, and therefore the creature always remains under the obligation to obey the Creator, who rightfully exacts such obedience. Deut. 32 : 4, Job 34 : 10, Rom. 1 : 32. If it is just that God should punish disobedience to the law, it is also just that He should exact obedience, whether man is able to render it or not. The parable of the unjust steward serves as an illustration of this. His Lord justly demands of him His goods, although He knows that he has squandered them.

II. That Man Cannot Keep the Law of God Perfectly is His Own Fault.

1. Question 7 proves that it is man's fault.

a) Although the fall took place through the instigation of the devil, man was not compelled to yield to the temptation and to obey the devil. He is, therefore, without excuse. 2 Cor. 11 : 3.

b) The disobedience of our first parents was wilful. For the command which God had given them was not difficult to fulfill. They were not driven to transgression either through necessity or want. They were allowed to eat of all the trees in the garden (Gen. 2 : 16). The devil had no power over them. God had rendered them many favors.

c) Through this disobedience man deprived himself of these divine gifts, *i. e.*, he lost the powers by which he might have rendered complete obedience, and through which all his posterity would have been able to render the same.

2. All his posterity must bear the consequences. When a man becomes bankrupt, his whole family passes into poverty and want. At the same time the claims of the creditor stand in law and equity against the debtor and his heirs. With sin we have also inherited the guilt. Rom. 5 : 19, Matt. 18 : 25.

III. The Demand of God is Intended to Bring Man to the Knowledge of His Misery.

God well knows that man in his present condition is incapable of keeping the law perfectly ; but He insists on it because of His holiness and unchangeableness, and to bring man to the recognition of sin, and of his consequent disability. 1 Cor. 15 : 56, Rom. 3 : 20. Not only is there no injustice done to man through God's demands, although man is incapable of fulfilling them ; but on the contrary, a great advantage accrues to man

through these demands; for they are the means which God uses to bring him to a knowledge of his inability and boundless misery.

OF THE PUNISHMENT OF SIN.

Question 10.

Will God suffer such disobedience and rebellion to go unpunished?

By no means, but is terribly displeased with our original as well as actual sins; and will punish them in his just judgment temporally and eternally, as he hath declared, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.

I. The Wrath of God Against Sin.

1. Sin and its guilt is the first part of our misery; the punishment of sin the second.

2. The wrath of God is not a violent agitation of the mind, or a passion like the anger of man which arises from his sinful flesh. Prov. 27: 4, James 1: 20. The wrath of God, of which the Scripture of the Old and New Testament speaks in numerous passages, is rather the expression of God's holy will, according to which He hates and punishes everything that is opposed to His holiness. God's wrath rests upon His holiness and righteousness, which manifest themselves through it. Because of His holiness, God hates, *i. e.*, hath no pleasure in wickedness. Ps. 5: 4, 5. Because of His righteousness, God punishes wickedness, which is forbidden by Him. Rom. 1: 18. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness." Therefore God "will" and cannot let disobedience and apostasy, *i. e.*, sin, go unpunished.

3. God's anger is terrible. This means not merely that He punishes sin with punishments so fearful as to strike terror into man (Ps. 2: 5, Heb. 10: 27, 31), but

it expresses also the greatness and energy of the wrath of God ; terrible, *i. e.*, with all earnestness and zeal. Deut. 4 : 24, Heb. 12 : 29, Nahum 1 : 6. The greatness and energy of God's love is the measure of His wrath. His wrath even testifies to His love, since it excludes every idea of indifference to evil on the part of God.

4. God is not only angry with actual sins committed in thought, word and deed, Rom. 2 : 8, 9, but also with inherited sin, original sin, the inborn evil desire. Eph. 2 : 3, Rom. 5 : 14. "Death reigned from Adam to Moses (although God did not reveal His will during that time through any law except that of conscience), even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression." This included all men, from Adam to Moses, to whom had not been given specially revealed law, such as God had given directly to Adam, and later through Moses to His people, and against which they sinned. This passage is therefore applied to children who have not yet sinned consciously, and yet are subject to the law of death, because the evil inclination is inherited by them. According to this teaching of the apostle, there is connected with sin inherited guilt.

II. The Punishment of Sin.

1. As little as God's anger is passion, so little does His sentence of punishment against sin rest upon caprice. It is a just sentence ; for man through his apostasy from God forfeited life and merited death. Gen. 2 : 17, Rom. 6 : 23, 1 Cor. 15 : 56, Rom. 2 : 5, 6, 11.

2. Therefore death, a word in which is embraced all the punishments of sin, passed upon the entire human race, without exception. Rom. 5 : 12. Calvin says : "We, therefore, dread death, first, because in reference to the body it is a sort of destruction ; secondly, because

the soul feels the curse of God ; and lastly, because the cause of death is estrangement from God. From this it follows that under the word death is comprehended all the misery into which Adam fell through his apostasy. For as soon as he apostatized from God, the source of life, he fell from his earlier state, so that he had to feel that man's life without God is wretched, involved in ruin, and therefore not unlike death. For this reason the condition of man after the fall is itself rightly called death. The misery of body and soul during the earthly life is, at it were, the ante-chamber of death, until death engulfs him up completely."

3. We distinguish in the punishment of sin a three-fold death : as "temporal" punishment, *a*) bodily, and *b*) spiritual death, and as "eternal" punishment, *c*) everlasting death.

a) *Bodily* death included the sickness, wretchedness and want of the body until its final dissolution. Rom. 7 : 24, Gen. 3 : 19, Ps. 90 : 7.

b) *Spiritual* death is the inner state of separation of the natural man from the living God, and involves everything connected with it.

1. Reason is darkened, and therefore the natural man is incapable of rightly knowing God. Eph. 4 : 18, Rom. 1 : 21, 23, 1 Cor. 2 : 14, Col. 1 : 21.

2. His free will is lost, and man is a servant of sin. Rom. 1 : 28, John 8 : 34, Rom. 7 : 14, Eph. 2 : 3, 5.

3. From his heart peace has departed. Isa. 48 : 22, Ps. 38 : 3, Isa. 59 : 2.

c) *Eternal* death consists in the torments which befall the sinner after this life in body and soul, and continue throughout all eternity. Luke 16 : 23, Matt. 10 : 28.

The awful torments of *eternal* death consist :

1. In the banishment from the presence of God. Matt. 25 : 41, 2 Thess. 1 : 9.

2. In the continual reproaches of conscience. Mark 9 : 44.

3. In despair, that this condition will not come to an end throughout all eternity. Matt. 8: 12; 18: 34, Rev. 14: 11.

III. The Penal Law.

1. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them." This is the penal law which God had announced and the legal punishment which followed on transgression, viz., sin. Deut. 27: 26, Gal. 3: 10. "Cursed," *i. e.*, excluded from the grace of God and delivered to destruction.

2. The punishment of sin is very certain. Gal. 6: 7, Ps. 50: 21, Heb. 9: 27.

IV. The Divine Judgments.

Definite divine judgments are set before us in Holy Scripture as proof of the punitive righteousness of God, and for our warning and exhortation.

a) Divine judgments against single or several individuals.

1. Our first parents, Adam and Eve. Gen. 3: 16-19.
2. Cain, the first man born and the first murderer. Gen. 4: 11, 12, Jude 11.
3. The Israelites in the wilderness. Ex. 32: 28, Num. 11: 33, 1 Cor. 10: 5, 6.
4. Korah's rebellion. Num. 16: 31-33, Jude 11.
5. Achan. Josh. 7: 25, 26.
6. Saul. 1 Sam. 15: 26; 31: 4.
7. Ahab and Jezebel. 1 Kings 22: 35, 38, 2 Kings 9: 33-36.
8. Judas, the betrayer. John 13: 27, Matt. 27: 5.
9. Ananias and Sapphira. Acts 5: 5, 10.

b) Divine judgments as types of the final judgment.

1. The flood. Gen. 7: 23, Matt. 24: 38, 39, 2 Peter 2: 5.
2. Sodom and Gomorrah. Gen. 19: 24, 25, Matt. 10: 15, 2 Peter 2: 6.

3. Pharaoh and the Egyptians. Ex. 14: 27, Rom. 9: 17.

4. Jerusalem. Matt. 24.

Question 11.

Is not God then also merciful?

God is indeed merciful, but also just; therefore his justice requires that sin, which is committed against the most high majesty of God, be also punished with extreme, that is, with everlasting punishment, both of body and soul.

I. God's Mercy.

1. God will punish sin temporarily and eternally. "Who knoweth the power of thine anger? Even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath." (Ps. 90: 11.) Objection is brought to this penal law of God on the ground that He is merciful, and, therefore, could not and would not reckon so exactly with the sin of man.

2. God is indeed merciful. Ps. 86: 15. But the natural man has a false notion of this mercy. God's mercy is not negative, *i. e.*, weakness. It does not consist in this, that He overlooks the sin of man and allows it to go unpunished, as Eli did (1 Sam. 3: 13), or as any other weak father might overlook the bad conduct and sins of his children. But it consists in this, that He prepares ways and means whereby He might forgive sin without violating His justice.

3. If God should allow sin to go unpunished, who would fear Him? Man would trifle with Him. Ps. 50: 21, Isa. 57: 11, Ezek. 33: 28-33, Gal. 6: 7.

II. God's Justice.

1. Justice, as well as mercy, is an essential attribute of God, *i. e.*, it belongs in like manner to His being. As God is one in Himself, the one attribute cannot exclude the other, and God cannot on account of His mercy act contrary to His justice. Ps. 11: 7, 2 Tim. 2: 13.

Augustine says: "Neither when God threatens, nor when He promises, does He disappoint any one." God's justice includes also His veracity. Ps. 33: 4. "For the word of the Lord is right; and all his works are done in truth," and He has pronounced in His penal law: "Cursed is every one that continueth not," etc.

2. One might object that it is too severe and hard that sin, which is only temporal, is requited by God, not merely with temporal, but also with eternal punishment. To this it might be replied that a punishment must correspond not only to the transgression, but also to the relations of the persons involved. Sin has been committed by man destined for eternity, against the most high majesty of the eternal God. Therefore it is rebellion against God, high treason against the King of kings. Ex. 5: 2, Ps. 2: 3, 4, Luke 19: 14.

Even in temporal affairs the punishment corresponds to the station of the injured person; high treason is more severely punished than an ordinary offence and breach of faith.

3. Sin is not a small matter. Every sin is high treason, and before God there is no difference between "great" or "small" sins; since every sin is an act of opposition to the will of the most high majesty. Through the severe punishment which God has set upon sin, and which He executes according to His righteousness, sin is to be known and felt in all its depth. Whoever will not obey, must suffer.

III. Mercy and Justice Do Not Exclude Each Other.

1. Both are united in God in such a manner that they can well go together, and each manifests itself in its own time and way. Ex. 34: 6, 7, 2 Thess. 1: 5-10, Rom. 11: 22.

2. Examples from Scripture.

a) The flood and Noah. Gen. 6-8. While judg-

ment and destruction overtook the entire human race, Noah obtained favor with God.

b) Sodom and Lot. Gen. 19. Sodom with all its inhabitants is condemned on account of its atrocious sins (Gen. 18 : 20), and is utterly destroyed ; but God's mercy is manifested to Lot, and to his family. Gen. 19 : 19.

c) The parable of the barren fig tree, Luke 13 : 6-9. God's mercy ; "let it alone this year also," if perchance it might bear fruit ; God's justice, "after that thou shalt cut it down."

3. God shows also mercy in His justice in punishing sin eternally with death, that the reign of sin might not be eternal, and that after the day of wrath there might not be an accumulation of wrath as of guilt. God also shows justice in His mercy, in that (as we shall see) He punishes with death the innocent surety for the guilty sinners.

IV. Conclusion.

We observe that the law, which reveals the holy will of God, and the transgression of which is followed by the severest punishment, cannot deliver man out of his misery. Its mission is only this, to awaken and enlighten conscience, that man might thoroughly know his misery, and thereby awaken in him the desire for deliverance. Rom. 3 : 19, 20. The Catechism in its first part is intended to awaken a consciousness of the misery of sin with its guilt and punishment, and of the necessity of redemption from sin, and thereby to awaken in man a longing for deliverance. For this purpose it appeals to God's word, and to experience. But the reason of the natural man, which does not so readily submit to a conviction of sin, offers various objections. These the Catechism considers, in order to refute them. They are as follows: 1) Whether God

Himself is not the cause of sin, Question 6 ; 2) whether there is not some capability for the good in man, Question 8 ; 3) whether God in His demands does not do man injustice, Question 9 ; 4) whether God's mercy is not in contradiction to punishment, Question 11. The purpose aimed at in their consideration is to bring about conviction, *i. e.*, the persuasion of the truth of God's word, Ps. 51 : 6 ; and to lead to the confession, Rom. 7 : 24 ; "O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?"

PART SECOND.

OF MAN'S DELIVERANCE.

The second part of the Catechism, in continuation of Question 11, shows how a reconciliation between God's justice and His mercy, after the counsel of His wisdom, is established, namely through the obedience and sacrifice of His only Son, Jesus Christ, for our sins. Deliverance means liberation, redemption, and reinstatement into the former condition ; or, according to Question 12, escape from temporal and eternal punishment, so as to regain God's favor, *i. e.*, become again acceptable to God, and be received into His communion.

The Heidelberg Catechism is charged by some with having forsaken, in Questions 12-17, the Biblical standpoint peculiarly its own, and with having developed a scholastic theory. The Catechism could indeed simply say that no man could deliver himself from His misery, nor be delivered by another man ; and that God, according to His mercy in giving up His Son, as He has determined from all eternity, has accomplished an eternal redemption for all who believe in Jesus.

But, indeed, no other thought than this is carried out in Questions 12–17, since the object is to explain more exhaustively how and why it has been accomplished in the way indicated, and how the justice and mercy of God are in harmony with each other. Our attention is directed, in the first place, to the conception of a Mediator who makes ransom for another; secondly, to the nature of the Mediator sought for in this case; and, lastly, Question 18 names the Mediator in whom these requirements are found. The conception of satisfaction and redemption is, however, thoroughly Biblical. And it is equally a Biblical thought to indicate the characteristics of the Mediator. In Heb. 7: 22–28 a similar method of proof is used. The conception of a Mediator is directly misconstrued, if Christ is looked upon as the security of the truth and love of God. Of this, the Scripture knows nothing. It recognizes and names Christ as a security only in so far as He appears for us before God.

OF SATISFACTION AND THE MEDIATOR.

Question 12.

Since, then, by the righteous judgment of God, we deserve temporal and eternal punishment, is there no way by which we may escape that punishment and be again received into favour?

God will have his justice satisfied; and therefore we must make this full satisfaction, either by ourselves or by another.

I. Full Satisfaction Must Be Made.

1. By “God’s Justice” we are not to understand here His attribute according to which He punishes sin, nor the righteous judgment which He has pronounced against it; but His righteous demand as Creator and Lord of man that he should fulfil the law completely, or suffer punishment for its transgression. The justice of God is satisfied through complete fulfillment of the law

or through perfect atonement, *i. e.*, through perfect obedience in the keeping of the law or in suffering punishment. Luke 10 : 28, Ezek. 18 : 4. The satisfaction that is demanded is this, that the debt by which the sinner is obligated to the justice of God be paid. But this perfect obedience to the law of God is due from man, as God originally created him, and the suffering of a sufficient penalty is due from man, as he has become through sin.

2. "Satisfaction" is the payment on the part of man, whereby God's violated justice is atoned for and man's lost righteousness is restored. It is paying in the sense of atoning for, restoring. Job 20 : 11, Ps. 69 : 4, Matt. 18 : 34, Philemon 18, 19, Mark 10 : 45.

3. The requirement of such satisfaction is a fundamental law of God. Isa. 1 : 27 ; 5 : 16, Josh. 24 : 19, Ex. 23 : 7.

II. By Whom Full Satisfaction Must Be Made.

1. The one who is guilty must render the satisfaction, and the one who has sinned must suffer the punishment. Deut. 27 : 26, Ezek. 18 : 4.

2. But in ordinary life it is also permitted that another, a surety, may take the place of the debtor and assume his obligations, in case of his inability to pay the debt or to suffer the punishment. Gen. 44 : 32, 33, Philemon 19.

3. Over against God's justice, *i. e.*, His just demand upon the sinner, a security is admissible. This is proved by the fulfillment of redemption through Christ, who is called in Heb. 7 : 22 the surety (not "executor") of the new covenant. Col. 2 : 14. "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." He has paid the debt for us as our surety, and thereby discharged the obligation. Ac-

according to Rom. 5 : 6–8, Christ died as surety for the ungodly.

4. The institution of sacrifices in the old covenant points also to this, that through another satisfaction may be made ; through the sacrifice there is made, even if not a complete, yet a symbolical satisfaction for the sinner by whom or for whom it is offered unto God. Lev. 9 : 7. In the fulfillment of redemption Christ is made the sin-offering for us, 1 Peter 2 : 24, “ Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree ” (literally : Who His own self carried our sins in His own body upon the wood—upon the cross as the altar, according to Lev. 9 : 7). Rom. 8 : 3, 2 Cor. 5 : 21.

5. References to the redemption from slavery may also be cited. He who was sold as a slave through inability to pay (Matt. 18 : 25), could either redeem himself, if he earned enough money, or could be redeemed through the payment of the debt by another. Mark 10 : 45. “ For even the Son of man came . . . to give his life a ransom (literally : As redemption money to buy freedom) for many.”

Question 13.

Can we ourselves then make this satisfaction ?

By no means ; but on the contrary we daily increase our debt.

After establishing (Ques. 12) the fact and nature of man's guilt and how satisfaction for it is to be made, we must further inquire who can render this satisfaction ; whether we ourselves (Ques. 13), or any mere creature (Ques. 14), and if neither, what sort of a Mediator we must seek for (Ques. 15).

1. There is a two-fold way (see Ques. 12, I., 1) to satisfy the justice of God, viz., by the fulfillment of the law and the suffering of its penalty. In neither respect can the payment, the satisfaction, be made by ourselves. Man cannot render the satisfaction,

2. By fulfilling the law.

a) Man has lost all power in the direction of the good. Job 9 : 2, 3, Ps. 143 : 4, Rom. 8 : 7, Matt. 16 : 26.

b) An externally honorable conduct, so-called civil righteousness, is excluded in relation to God, who demands perfect obedience. Isa. 64 : 6.

c) A restoring or making good again is also out of the question ; for whatever good we could do, we are indebted to God for doing it. And if we cannot in our own strength in the present do any good, much less can we perform an excess of goodness that is to atone for the past.

d) On the contrary we daily increase our guilt through new sin. That we daily sin anew is proved by our consciences and by Christ Himself when He teaches us daily to pray : Forgive us our debts. 1 Kings 8 : 46, Jas. 3 : 2, Rom. 2 : 5.

One who presumes to be his own deliverer resembles a man who is sunk in the mire, and with his own hand attempts to draw himself out of it by the hair. Not only does he fail to draw himself out, but he works himself into it deeper and deeper.

3. It is not possible for us to make satisfaction by enduring the punishment ; for it will be not only temporal, *i. e.*, finite, but also eternal, and we shall not come forth from it throughout eternity. Isa. 33 : 14.

4. If, therefore, the justice of God cannot be satisfied by us, it is necessary that satisfaction should be made for us by another, if we are to escape the punishment and be again received into favor, *i. e.*, if we are to be delivered.

Question 14.

Can there then be found anywhere one, who is a mere creature, able to satisfy for us ?

None ; for first, God will not punish any other creature for the sin which man hath committed ; and further, no mere creature can

sustain the burden of God's eternal wrath against sin, so as to deliver others from it.

1. No other creature can make satisfaction for us ; neither a man like us, nor a higher (angel) or a lower (animal) creature.

a) An angel cannot take the punishment upon himself, for he is a spiritual being. The punishment for sin must be endured in body and soul.

b) An animal cannot make satisfaction, for it does not have an immortal soul and cannot voluntarily take the punishment upon itself. The sacrifices of the old covenant were not a complete satisfaction for sin, because "in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." Heb. 10 : 3, 4.

c) Satisfaction cannot be rendered by a man like ourselves, because such an one cannot pay for his own sins, much less for the sins of the entire race. For example, how can a man, who himself owes 5000 marks and cannot pay them, become security for the debt of another, for perhaps 500,000 marks, or offer to pay his debt.

2. A mere creature, *i. e.*, one that is nothing more than a creature, cannot at all make satisfaction for our sins,

a) Because every creature of God owes obedience to Him for itself.

b) Because God will not punish any other creature for the sin of man. Gen. 2 : 17, Ezek. 18 : 4.

c) Because no mere creature can sustain the burden of God's eternal wrath, *i. e.*, the weight of eternal damnation for himself, much less for others. Deut. 4 : 24, Ps. 130 : 3, Nahum 1 : 6.

Question 15.

What sort of a mediator and deliverer, then, must we seek for ?

For one who is very man, and perfectly righteous ; and yet more powerful than all creatures ; that is, one who is also very God.

1. Since we cannot deliver ourselves, and no other mere creature can make satisfaction for us, we must seek elsewhere for a Mediator and Deliverer, who can make satisfaction for all that is needful for our redemption.

2. A mediator is one who, standing between two parties and, possessing the necessary prerogatives, reconciles and unites them. Something analogous is found in the office of an arbitrator. Such an one must be impartial. Gal. 3 : 20. "Now a mediator is not a mediator of one" (one party). He must, therefore, be equally distant or equally near to both parties.

3. The necessary qualifications of a Mediator between God and man are :

a) That he be a true man, *i. e.*, one who possesses body and soul and all the essential attributes of man.

b) A righteous man, *i. e.*, one who is himself without any sin whatsoever, and who keeps the law of God perfectly. Heb. 7 : 26.

c) More powerful and higher than all creatures, that with his righteousness he may make full satisfaction in the day of judgment.

d) He must, therefore, be at the same time true God. Heb. 7 : 26, Hos. 1 : 7, Jer. 23 : 6.

e) God and man in one person. Isa. 7 : 17. Immanuel, *i. e.*, God with us. For a Mediator who were God only, could not suffer and die, and thus could not bear the punishment ; and a Mediator who were mere man, would not have the power to bear the burden of God's eternal wrath. He must be man in order to render obedience and to be able to die ; he must be God that his obedience and death may be of endless power and eternal value. If he were God only or a mere man, he would not be a Mediator between God and man.

f) We might further add that it is essential that the

Mediator be designated by the injured party, *i. e.*, by God, and that he himself be willing and ready to take upon himself the work of mediation.

Question 16.

Why must he be very man, and also perfectly righteous?

Because the justice of God requires that the same human nature, which hath sinned, should likewise make satisfaction for sin; and one, who is himself a sinner, cannot satisfy for others.

1. The Mediator must be a true man.

a) If the justice of God is to be satisfied in behalf of man, the law which man has transgressed must be fulfilled, and the suffering to which man made himself liable as punishment for sin, must be endured. This can be done only by one who is really man and can suffer and die. Heb. 9: 22.

b) The truth of God requires it, as expressed in the promise in Gen. 3: 15.

c) Because the deliverer is to be the head of the new humanity, with which he can have compassion, because he experienced their misery in himself. Heb. 5: 2.

2. The Mediator must be a righteous man.

a) Only a sinless man can stand before the holy and just God and enter into communion with Him. Isaiah 6: 5.

b) Only a righteous, *i. e.*, sinless man, who has not committed any sin and to whom no sinfulness adheres, can suffer the punishment for the sins of others.

Question 17.

Why must he in one person be also very God?

That he might, by the power of his God-head, sustain, in his human nature, the burden of God's wrath; and might obtain for and restore to us, righteousness and life.

1. Divine power is necessary so to bear the eternal wrath of God in time, that it may thereby be turned

away from the sins themselves. No one can do this who has not the power to overcome hell and the grave. Isa. 9 : 6.

2. In order to obtain righteousness and life for others it is necessary that one does not owe for himself obedience under the law, and he who would redeem others, must have power over his own life in order to yield it up. Isa. 53 : 12, John 10 : 18.

3. The righteousness and the life which the Mediator obtains through his obedience and suffering must, in order to be of any benefit to the sinner, be made his own, must be imparted to him. This communication of the new life to man, who is dead in sins, can only be the work of God, from whom proceedeth the Holy Ghost, who brings about spiritual resurrection and renewal.

4. The Mediator must be God and man in one person.

a) Because there can only be one Mediator, and because such a Mediator must be equally near to God and man.

b) That the divinity might support the humanity in the difficult work of mediation.

c) That the doing and suffering of humanity might be of full value.

Question 18.

Who then is that mediator, who is in one person both very God, and a real righteous man?

Our Lord Jesus Christ ; who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

I. Jesus Christ is the Only and True Mediator.

1. Moses was also called a mediator. He was the mediator of the old covenant between God and the people of Israel. But his mediatorial office consisted only in this, that by the power of God he led His peo-

ple out of external bondage and delivered to them the law of God. Gal. 3 : 19. "It was ordained . . . by the hand of a mediator" (Moses). But he was a sinful man like his fellows. On account of his sins he could not even lead his people into the earthly land of promise. The law whose mediator he was serves only to bring to a knowledge of sin, but it cannot create life and health and salvation.

2. Christ is placed over against Moses as the true Mediator. John 1 : 17, Heb. 3 : 1-6.

3. Christ is testified to as the only Mediator. 1 Tim. 2 : 5, 6, Heb. 8 : 6 ; 9 : 15 ; 12 : 24, John 14 : 6.

- II. Christ Has All the Attributes of the True Mediator.

1. Christ was a true man.

a) By His birth. Gal. 4 : 4, Heb. 2 : 14.

b) In all His life on earth He proved Himself man. Phil. 2 : 7.

c) He had a human development. Luke 2 : 40, 52.

d) He had human needs. Luke 8 : 23, Matt. 4 : 2, John 4 : 7 ; 19 : 28, Mark 4 : 38.

e) He had human sensations. John 11 : 33, 35, Luke 12 : 50 ; 22 : 44.

f) Also in death He was like man in that He experienced a separation of body and soul. Luke 23 : 46 ; John 19 : 33, 34.

2. Christ was a righteous man.

He was without sin. Luke 1 : 35, John 8 : 46, 1 Peter 2 : 22 ; 3 : 18, Heb. 4 : 15.

3. Christ is true God.

He is from eternity. John 8 : 58 ; 17 : 5 ; 1 : 1, Luke 1 : 35, John 1 : 18 ; 14 : 9 ; 10 : 30, 1 John 5 : 20.

4. Christ is God and man in one person.

He is God from eternity to eternity, but man in time and throughout eternity. John 1 : 18, 1 Tim. 3 : 16, Rom. 9 : 5.

5. For the establishment of the mediatorial office Christ was

a) Appointed by God. Gal. 4: 4, Heb. 5: 5.

b) Ready of His own free will. John 10: 18, Matt. 26: 42.

III. Christ is Given Unto Us by God for Complete Redemption and Righteousness.

1. Satisfaction had to be made to the justice of God through a perfect Mediator. Sinful humanity could not produce such an one. God, therefore, according to His eternal counsel of grace, provided a way and means, in that He united with His righteousness, with His demand for a perfect satisfaction in obedience and suffering, His unfathomable love and mercy, and gives unto us out of free grace the only true Mediator, Jesus Christ. John 3: 16.

2. Christ is the only Mediator, not only in His person as true God and man, but also in His work. 2 Cor. 5: 19.

a) He has rendered perfect obedience. Phil. 2: 8.

b) He has made perfect atonement through His suffering. Rom. 5: 8, 9, 1 Peter 3: 18.

3. Therefore he is made unto us by God wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. 1 Cor. 1: 30.

a) Wisdom. Col. 2: 3, John 8: 12.

b) Righteousness. Rom. 3: 25, 2 Cor. 5: 21.

c) Sanctification. John 17: 19, 1 John 1: 7.

d) Redemption. Eph. 1: 7, Heb. 9: 12, Luke 21: 28, Rev. 21: 4, 5, 2 Tim. 4: 18.

OF THE HOLY GOSPEL.

Question 19.

Whence knowest thou this?

From the holy Gospel, which God himself revealed first in Paradise; and afterwards published by the Patriarchs and Prophets, and was pleased to represent it by the shadows of sacrifices, and the other ceremonies of the law; and lastly has accomplished it by his only begotten Son.

I. What is Meant by the Holy Gospel.

1. As humanity could not evolve a Mediator out of itself, neither did it choose or appoint Jesus Christ, the Son of God, to this office, nor can man of himself know the way to life. God must reveal it to him. God gave Christ to man and made preparation for His appearance by word and act in the history of the old covenant. This was not done in secret, but amongst God's people, to whom it was proclaimed, in order that when the Mediator came, the Scriptures which contained all these revelations, might testify of Him and for Him. John 5: 39. "They are they which testify of me," viz., the Scriptures of the Old Testament. In the new covenant is portrayed the fulfillment through Christ, and it in turn confirms the truth of the proclamation in the old covenant.

God Himself is the originator of the Gospel, not simply in Paradise (where He revealed it direct to our first parents), but also in the case of the patriarchs and prophets (through whom it was published), and in connection with the sacrifices and the law of the old covenant (through which He was pleased to represent it), as well as in the new covenant, where He accomplished it.

The holy Scriptures of the old as well as of the new covenant, as the record of these revelations, are equally

of divine origin. They are inspired by God. 2 Tim. 3: 16, 2 Peter 1: 21. Upon this rests the acceptance of the entire Scripture as divine, and its unconditional authority in the true Church of Christ.

2. The Gospel means good news, gladsome message. But not every glad message, *e. g.*, that a beloved relative has recovered from sickness away from home, or that a large inheritance has fallen to one, is gospel as understood here. To distinguish it from all other messages, it is called the holy Gospel, and carries with it the glad message or proclamation of the Mediator between God and man, the Redeemer and Savior. Isa. 52: 7.

This glad message was revealed by God in the Old Testament through proclamation in prophecies, and representation in types. In the New Testament it is found in the fulfillment of all this by Jesus Christ, in His person and work. The Gospel is, therefore, in the old covenant the glad message of the Savior who was to come; in the New Testament it is the glad message of the Savior who has come. Zech. 9: 9, Luke 2: 10, 11.

3. Law and Gospel.

A) Law and Gospel agree in this that both are one revelation from God, and that in both the being, will and works of God are treated of. On the other hand, they are distinguished from each other in the following points:

a) The law was impressed upon the heart of man in creation, and was, therefore, by nature familiar to all. Rom. 2: 15. The Gospel is not known by nature, but it has been revealed from heaven to the Church of the old and new covenant through the Mediator Christ. Matt. 11: 27; 16: 17, John 1: 18.

b) The law teaches what we ought to be and what we should render unto God; but it does not impart the strength to offer God what is due Him, nor does it indicate the way by which we might attain this ability.

On the other hand, the Gospel teaches in what way we may become such persons as the law demands. Matt. 18 : 23, Luke 10 : 28, Mark 4 : 26.

c) The law promises life to those who are perfect in the same. Lev. 18 : 5, Matt. 19 : 17. The Gospel promises life to those who are justified through faith in Christ. And yet they do not contradict each other. The law is the letter which killeth, and is a ministration of death. It is the office which preacheth condemnation. By letter is to be understood the outward proclamation and bare knowledge of what is to be done. Rom. 3 : 23 ; 4 : 15, 2 Cor. 3 : 7, 9. The Gospel is a ministration of life. It is the office which preacheth righteousness, and it is spirit. Rom. 1 : 17, 2 Cor. 3 : 8, 9.

B) With reference to the relation between the law and the Gospel, Olevianus says :

“The law is a principle which God has implanted in nature, and has repeated and renewed in the commandments, in which He presents to us as in a handwriting what we are bound to do and what to leave undone, viz., a perfect inner and outer obedience ; and He promises eternal life on the condition that we keep the law of God perfectly all our life. But on the other hand, eternal damnation is threatened if we do not keep it, but transgress it in one or more points. Deut. 27 : 26. After the law has once been transgressed, there is no promise that our sin will be forgiven through its help, *i. e.*, through the works of the law, but the sentence of condemnation follows immediately. But the Gospel, or the glad tidings, is a truth concerning which the wisest men have known nothing by nature. It has been revealed from heaven. In it God does not make a demand of us, but He offers and gives to us the righteousness which the law demands of us, viz., the perfect obedience of the suffering and death of Jesus Christ, whereby all our sins and condemnation with

which the law threatens us, are pardoned and blotted out. Rom. 5, Gal. 3. God gives us in the Gospel the forgiveness of sins, not under the condition that we keep the law, but as a free gift through faith in Jesus Christ. Although we have never kept the law, and even now cannot keep it perfectly, He has nevertheless forgiven us our sins and offers eternal life. John 1 : 17, Rom. 8 : 3, 4, Gal. 3 : 12-15."

4. The effects of the Gospel are :

- a) Faith. Rom. 10 : 17, 2 Cor. 3 : 8, Rom. 1 : 16.
- b) Through faith complete conversion, justification, and renewal of man.

5. The certainty and truth of the Gospel are confirmed :

- a) By the testimony of the Holy Ghost.
- b) By the predictions of the prophets in the Old and their fulfillment in the New Testament.
- c) By the miracles through which the teaching of the Gospel is confirmed.
- d) Through the testimony of evangelical truth itself, in that it alone shows the way by which we may escape sin and death, and in that it alone offers a real comfort to the troubled conscience.

II. The Progressive Communication of the Gospel in the Old Testament.

The communication of the Gospel in the Old Testament passed through three stages :

1. The immediate revelation of God to our first parents in Paradise, the so-called protevangelium.
2. The announcement to the patriarchs and prophets in promises and prophecies.
3. The representation in types (persons, acts and customs).

The communications and representations which arose in these several ways were always adapted to the circumstances of the persons and the relations of the times, and can only be rightly known and understood in the

light of the New Testament ; even as one can infer from the shadow the body which casts it, but can really only know the latter when it appears. Thus all that points to the appearance of Christ in the flesh in the Old Testament, is designated as shadow in the New Testament. Col. 2 : 17.

In the entire New Testament great stress is laid upon these pre-announcements, and frequent reference is made to the words “that the Scripture might be fulfilled.” Christ Himself appeals to that which was spoken of Him. Luke 24 : 44.

A) The protevangelium in Paradise.

Thus are designated the words which God spake to the serpent. Gen. 3 : 15. In the nature of the circumstances this enmity first manifested itself between the posterity of the woman (men in general) and the offspring of the serpent. But as in the temptation and in the judgment pronounced against the first sin, not only the animal, the serpent, is involved, but also the one whose instrument it was in bringing sin into the world, his power must be destroyed if sin is again to be put out of the way. Thus this word becomes a promise of the future Redeemer, the one who bruises the serpent’s head. In this sense Eve also apprehended it and said at the birth of her first son (the first born of man) : I have gotten the man, the Lord. Gen. 4 : 1. But she was disappointed. The first born of man did not become a deliverer, but a murderer. The promised seed of the woman is “the Son of Man” who appeared in the time appointed by God. Gal. 4 : 4, Matt. 1 : 18–20.

Christ, the Son of Man, has bruised the serpent’s head, *i. e.*, has overcome the devil and in behalf of the children of God deprived him of his power. 1 John 3 : 8. As the struggle in Paradise commenced with temptation, so also in the wilderness, according to the counsel and will of God. Matt. 4 : 1.

The Son of Man repulsed the three-fold attack. Luke 4: 13. "And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season," but not for ever. Thereafter he contended against the Son of Man through his instruments, the Scribes and Pharisees. John 8: 44. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." Through them he approached the crucified one at the end in the same manner as in the first temptation. Matt. 27: 39. Satan also found an instrument in Judas, the gifted disciple, against the Son of Man, as he had found one against our first parents in Paradise in the crafty serpent. Luke 22: 3. The old serpent bruised the heel of the Son of Man, brought Him to the cross, to death, but not to fall; for He was indeed tempted in all points, yet without sin (Heb. 4: 15), until He exclaimed in His expiring breath: It is finished. Thereby the victory over the devil was gained, and in spite of the bruised heel, the head of the old serpent was crushed.

B) Proclamation of the Gospel through promises and prophecies.

1. A progressive development characterizes the proclamation of the Gospel before Christ. The nearer the time of fulfillment approaches, the more clear and definite does it become, from the protevangelium in Paradise until Micah and Malachi, the last prophets of the Old Testament. We may picture this progress by concentric circles passing from the widest to the narrowest, the centre of which is Christ, the fulfillment.

2. In the protevangelium God had promised (even if not brought forth in the ordinary manner, except as the Seed of the woman) that the Redeemer should come forth from humanity, should be man. In the succeeding promises, the circles from which He was to be expected are drawn more and more narrow.

a) SHEM.—Among the three great branches into which the human family was separated after the flood, the Semites are the ones among whom the Redeemer was to appear. Gen. 9: 27. This was fulfilled in the first place according to the promise of God, Ex. 29: 44, 45, by the dwelling of the Lord's glory over the ark of the covenant in the tabernacle and the temple. Ex. 40: 34, 35, 1 Kings 8: 11. Secondly, it was accomplished by the appearance of the Son of God in the flesh amongst the children of Israel. John 1: 14, Col. 2: 9. Finally, it will be fulfilled in greatest splendor after the renovation of heaven and earth. Rev. 21: 1, 3.

b) ABRAHAM.—Among the Semitic tribes, the children of Israel are the people out of whom the Redeemer was to come, and herein are the marvellous ways of God manifested, in that He did not choose for Himself an existent people, but (that no flesh, whether of the progenitor or people, might boast) gave Isaac to Abraham and Sarah, when both were old, and created His chosen people for Himself. Gen. 26: 4. The people, *i. e.*, the descendants of Abraham, are in the first place the bearers of the promise, which is finally fulfilled in Christ. Gal. 3: 16, Matt. 1: 1. The same promise that was given to Abraham is repeated to Isaac and to Jacob. Gen. 26: 4; 28: 14. The fulfillment is also in Christ. Rom. 9: 5.

c) JUDAH.—Among the people of Israel, it is the tribe of Judah which God designates through the blessing of Jacob. Gen. 49: 10. The fulfillment of this promise in Christ is referred to in Rev. 5: 5. When Jesus was born, Herod, who was not of the tribe of Judah, but an Edomite, a descendant of Esau, was king at Jerusalem.

d) DAVID.—In the tribe of Judah, it is the house, the family of David, which God chooses. 1 Sam. 16: 6–13. The promise which God gave to David later

(2 Sam. 7: 12-14) referred first to Solomon; but it was finally fulfilled in its completeness in Christ. Matt. 22: 42; 1: 1, Acts 2: 30-32, Rom. 1: 1-3, Heb. 1: 5.

e) In this narrowest circle, to which the prophecies of all the succeeding prophets are limited, again two special indications are given, the nearer the time of fulfillment approaches.

1. Christ was not only to come from the house of David, but he was to be born in Bethlehem, the city of David, even when David's descendants should no longer be living there. Micah 5: 2, Matt. 2: 4-6, Luke 2: 4-7. In order that this promise might be fulfilled, according to the divine government of the world, the mightiest ruler upon the earth gave forth a command that set the whole Roman empire in motion.

2. The Redeemer was to be born a son of a virgin. In Isaiah 7: 14 the prophet prophesies of this son of a virgin. Matt. 1: 18-23, Luke 1: 27, 31, 34.

After the announcement made by the prophet Isaiah, prophecy reverts again to the first promise of the seed of the woman.

3. God gave the promise of the Redeemer to the patriarchs, to whom, in the widest sense, belong (exclusive of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the progenitors of God's people) also the earlier ancestors from Adam until Noah, the founders of the human race, and Shem, and later David, the founder of the royal family. Through them the announcement was made to their posterity. The prophets, to whom in the widest sense also Moses (John 5: 46), Samuel and David (Acts 3: 24; 2: 30) belong, prophesied, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and from the points of view of their times, of the future Redeemer. Both the great prophets, Elijah and Elisha, who left no writings, through their typical activity and their miracles prophesied of Him and pointed toward Him.

a) The first prophecy concerning Christ from human lips, which has been transmitted to us by Moses, is in a remarkable manner that of a heathen prophet, Balaam. He spake not by his own will, but against his will, impelled and driven by the Holy Ghost, when he was bribed to curse Israel. Num. 24: 17, There shall come a star out of Jacob and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel. This is fulfilled in the star of the (likewise heathen) wise men from the East (Matt. 2: 2) and in the designation of Christ as the morning star (2 Peter 1: 19, Rev. 22: 16).

Moses himself prophesied of Christ. Deut. 18: 15, 18, 19. The fulfillment of his prophecy we see in Christ. John 6: 14, Mark 9: 7, Acts 3: 22, John 7: 16; 8: 26.

b) IN THE PSALMS.—There are those of a special character which contain references to Christ, and are therefore called Messianic: 1. Of Christ's person and office, Ps. 3, 110, 128; 2. Of Christ's suffering and glory, Ps. 2, 8, 16, 22, 68; 3. Of the propagation of the gospel, Ps. 19, 40, 45, 47, 50, 72, 78, 93, 97, 98.

c) All the prophets prophesied of Christ, and in their writings are contained numerous, more or less distinct (direct or indirect), prophecies of Him. Luke 24: 27, Acts 10: 43.

1. ISAIAH.—The church father Augustine already called this prophet, on account of his many and distinct prophecies of Christ, the "evangelist of the old covenant." The most important passages are: Isa. 7: 14, of the son of a virgin (Matt. 1: 18, 22, 23, Luke 1: 27, 31, 34); Isa. 9: 2, 6, 7, of the light in the darkness and the prince of peace (Luke 1: 79; 2: 7, 11, John 3: 16, Gal. 4: 4, Luke 1: 32); Isa. 11: 1, 2, of the rod out of the stem of Jesse (Matt. 2: 23; 12: 17, 18); Isa. 40: 3, of the forerunner of Christ (Matt. 3: 3); Isa. 40: 11, of the shepherd (John 10: 11, 12);

Isa. 42 : 1-4, of the meek servant of God (Matt. 12 : 17-21) ; Isa. 53, of the suffering servant of God, the Redeemer. The fulfillment of each verse in this entire chapter may be found in the New Testament : V. 1—John 12 : 38 ; v. 2—John 19 : 5 ; v. 3—Mark 9 : 12, Matt. 26 : 67 ; 27 : 30, 41 ; v. 4—Matt. 8 : 17 ; v. 5—1 Peter 2 : 24 ; v. 6—1 Peter 2 : 25 ; v. 7—Mark 14 : 16, John 1 : 29, Acts 8 : 32 ; v. 8—Acts 8 : 33, 35 ; v. 9—John 19 : 38-42, 1 Peter 2 : 22 ; v. 10—Matt. 20 : 28 ; v. 11—1 Peter 3 : 18 ; v. 12—Mark 15 : 28, Luke 23 : 28.

2. JEREMIAH.—Jer. 23 : 5, 6, of the Lord who is our righteousness (1 Cor. 1 : 30).

3. EZEKIEL.—Ezek. 34 : 23, of the good shepherd (John 10 : 12).

4. DANIEL.—Dan. 9 : 25, 26, of Christ the prince (Mark 1 : 15) ; Dan. 7 : 13, 14, of the Son of Man (Luke 21 : 27 ; 1 : 33).

5. HOSEA.—Hos. 6 : 3, of the morning (Titus 3 : 4).

6. JOEL.—Joel 3 : 1-5, of the Spirit that will be sent (John 14 : 26 ; 16 : 7, Acts 2 : 16, 33).

7. AMOS.—Amos 9 : 11, of the restorer of the fallen tabernacle of David (Acts 15 : 15, 16).

8. OBADIAH.—Obad. v. 21, of salvation upon Mount Zion (Luke 22 : 39, Acts 1 : 12).

9. JONAH.—Jonah 2 : 1, in the whale's belly (Matt. 12 : 39, 40).

10. MICAH.—Micah 2 : 13, of the one that led captivity captive (Mark 16 : 4, 6, Eph. 4 : 8).

11. NAHUM.—Nahum 2 : 1, of the messenger of peace (Luke 2 : 14, John 14 : 27).

12. HABAKKUK.—Hab. 2 : 3, of the fulness of time and the certain coming of the promised one (Mark 1 : 15, Gal. 4 : 4).

13. ZEPHANIAH.—Zeph. 3 : 9, of the cheerful messenger (Titus 3 : 4) ; Zeph. 3 : 15, of the king of Israel (John 1 : 49).

14. HAGGAI.—Hag. 2: 8, of the consolation of the Gentiles (Matt. 5: 4, Acts 8: 39; 10: 44, 45; 11: 18; 13: 48).

15. ZECHARIAH.—Zech. 13: 1, of the open fountain (John 4: 13; 7: 37, 38).

16. MALACHI.—Mal. 3: 1, of the angel of the covenant (John 2: 14–16, Heb. 8: 6, 8–10; 9: 15).

C) Representation of the gospel through types in the Old Testament.

1. THE GOSPEL IS TYPIFIED.—As the announcements of the prophets are prophecies of Christ in word, so also are the types prophecies in persons and things (acts, occurrences, arrangements or customs). The types in the Old Testament are pre-representations of Christ, but only in individual features. The comparison and interpretation must be made in the light and by the help of the New Testament. The method of interpreting the type, however, dare not be arbitrary or degenerate into play-work. That which was typical of Christ in the Old Testament, we recognize from the relations or indications in the New Testament. Heb. 8: 5, Col. 2: 17.

2. We distinguish personal and material types. Only the most important are here referred to.

a) PERSONAL TYPES.

1. ADAM.—Rom. 5: 14, 1 Cor. 15: 22, 47, 49.

2. MELCHIZEDEK.—Gen. 14: 18–20, Heb. 6: 20–7: 4. The points of likeness: His mysterious descent and his entire appearance; his name “king of righteousness” and “king of Salem,” *i. e.*, of peace; his office as king and priest; his gifts, bread and wine; he is higher than Abraham and blesses him.

3. ISAAC AT THE SACRIFICE.—Gen. 22. The points of likeness: He is the beloved and only son of his father; during the three days of the journey he was to Abraham as dead; the conversation with his father

(Matt. 26 : 39, 42) ; he is bound and laid upon the wood (1 Peter 2 : 24) ; his silence and his resignation ; the word of the Lord to Abraham (Rom. 8 : 32).

4. JOSEPH.—Gen. 37–45. The points of likeness : He is the favorite son (the chosen) of his father ; he walks in obedience to him ; on this account he is hated by his brothers ; he receives revelations of his future glory ; he is sold by his brothers, at the suggestion of Judah, and degraded to a slave ; he endures the temptation ; he is falsely accused and condemned without judgment and justice ; he meets two evil-doers, one of whom is pardoned ; he is in a subterranean dungeon as in a grave, forgotten of men ; he is elevated ; he is called the governor of the land who provides his brothers and strangers (Jews and Gentiles) with bread that they may live ; he forgives his brothers (Luke 23 : 34) ; his words to his brothers. Gen. 50 : 20, 21.

5. MOSES IS COMPARED TO CHRIST.—Hebrews 3. The points of comparison : He is persecuted as the newborn child ; he is forty years in the wilderness of Midian ; he leads the people of God out of the house of bondage of Egypt through the Red Sea (1 Cor. 10 : 1, 2) ; by him the law was given as the mediator of the old covenant (John 1 : 17, Heb. 3 : 2).

6. JOSHUA.—Points of comparison : His name (Joshua—Jesus, a Savior) ; he leads the people of God into the promised land, to Canaan, and apportioned the same to them.

7. DAVID, as the king chosen by God ; his throne and kingdom ; his people revolt against him and he passes over Cedron to suffer (John 18 : 1) ; but especially a type of Christ in his writings, the Messianic psalms.

8. JONAH, the prophet, whom Christ Himself designated as a type of Himself. Matt. 12 : 40.

b) MATERIAL TYPES.

1. THE OFFERINGS, especially the sin-offering and the great offering of atonement. Sacrifices are offerings of man to God for atonement or for gratitude, and symbolize in both cases the payment of a debt; for they are not intended to be equivalents. Heb. 10 : 3.

The sin-offering was made through the slaying and burning of a pure male animal without blemish. The one that sacrificed laid his hands upon the animal, symbolically transferring his sin to it; then it was bound and slain by the priest to suffer death for sin in place of man, and its blood was sprinkled upon the altar, the typical emblem of the presence of God. Finally it was burnt, that the odor might ascend to God. Ex. 29 : 18, 25, Lev. 17 : 11, Heb. 9 : 22.

While through the sin-offerings the sins of the single individual were atoned for, the sacrifice on the great day of atonement was offered by the high priest for the sins of all the people. Lev. 16, 23, Num. 29, John 11 : 50-52, Heb. 9 : 11-28. Christ is both high priest and sacrifice at the same time.

2. THE PASSOVER AND ITS REPETITION.—Ex. 12, 1 Cor. 5 : 7, John 19 : 36. Christ connects the institution of the holy supper with the passover and its significance. Matt. 26 : 17, 26-29.

3. THE TEMPLE AND PRIESTHOOD.—Heb. 5-10, John 1 : 19, 21.

4. THE MANNA.—Ex. 16 : 15; and the rock which gave forth water in the desert. Ex. 17 : 6, 1 Cor. 10 : 3, 4, John 6 : 31-35.

5. THE BRAZEN SERPENT.—Num. 21 : 4-9, John 3 : 14, 15. The serpent, the image of the curse—Christ became a curse for us, Gal. 3 : 13; the serpent lifted up upon a pole—Christ upon the wood, 1 Peter 2 : 24; the believing look upon the serpent brought healing—faith in Christ, the one who is lifted upon the cross and

exalted into heaven, brings redemption and deliverance from destruction, John 3: 16.

III. The Fulfillment in the New Testament.

1. In Christ all (promises, prophecies and types) has been fulfilled, *i. e.*, has come to its perfect realization. That which was indicated by prophecy in word and deed, is realized in Him. This He indicates in the following passages: Mark 1: 15, Luke 22: 37; 24: 25-27, 44, John 5: 46; 1: 45, Acts 3: 18, Rom 1: 1, 2, 2 Cor. 1: 20.

2. In many passages of the New Testament Christ and His apostles appeal expressly to this, that definite promises have been fulfilled in Him, with the remark: "As it is written," or, "in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled." The following might yet be added as the most important passages:

a) CHRIST.—Matt. 21: 16 (Ps. 8: 2)—Matt. 21: 42 (Ps. 118: 22)—Matt. 22: 43, 44 (Ps. 110: 1)—Luke 4: 21 (Isa. 61: 1)—John 13: 18 (Ps. 41: 9)—John 15: 25 (Ps. 69: 4).

b) THE APOSTLES.—Matt. 1: 22 (Isa. 7: 14)—Matt. 2: 15 (Ex. 4: 22, Hos. 11: 1)—Matt. 8: 17 (Isa. 53: 4, 5)—Matt. 12: 17-21 (Isa. 42: 1-4) Matt. 13: 35 (Ps. 78: 2)—Matt. 21: 4 (Zech. 9: 9)—Matt. 27: 35 (Ps. 22: 18)—Mark 15: 28 (Isa. 53: 12)—John 2: 17 (Ps. 69: 9)—John 12: 39-41 (Isa. 6: 9, 10)—John 19: 24 (Ps. 22: 18)—John 19: 28 (Ps. 22: 15)—John 19: 36 (Ps. 34: 20)—John 19: 37 (Zech. 12: 10)—Acts 2: 34-36 (Ps. 110: 1)—Acts 13: 33 (Ps. 2: 7)—Acts 13: 47 (Isa. 42: 6)—1 Cor. 15: 54 (Isa. 25: 8, Hos. 13: 14)—Heb. 2: 6-9 (Ps. 8: 4-6)—Heb. 10: 5-10 (Ps. 40: 7-9).

In the old covenant faith was to be awakened and hope enlivened through the promises, prophecies and types in prospect of their fulfillment. The retrospect

of the prophecies and their fulfillment, the latter of which is not yet fully accomplished (Acts 3: 21), is given a place in the new covenant to strengthen faith and fill the heart with comfort.

(For ordinary instruction it is sufficient to cite the promises under A and B, b and c; of the prophecies, Isa. 53; of the personal types, Isaac and Joseph; of the material types, the sacrifices and the brazen serpent.)

Question 20.

Are all men, then, as they perished in Adam, saved by Christ?

No, only those who are ingrafted into him, and receive all his benefits by a true faith.

1. All men, as descendants of Adam, conceived and born in sin and living in sin, are lost, *i. e.*, have become subject to judgment and condemnation. Rom. 5: 12, 18. The point of comparison is not found in the unlimited extension of condemnation and justification upon all men, but in this, that both proceed from one person, the former from the first and the latter from the second Adam, and that in the nature itself of men there is no difference. Verse 18 is supplemented by v. 19. Calvin says on v. 18: "As it has come to pass through the judgment of God that the sin of one abides to the condemnation of many, so grace becomes effective to the righteousness of many." Lampe says: "It indicates no less than that Christ is the head of all those who are saved, just as Adam was the head of all those who have fallen under condemnation. Not all will be saved." Matt. 7: 13, 14; 22: 14.

2. In order that we may be rescued from destruction and be saved, *i. e.*, delivered, which according to Scripture can only be accomplished through Christ, we must come into communion with Him, which again is only possible through faith in Him, as the means ordained by God for this end. John 3: 16, Mark 16: 16.

3. Faith is the means ordained by God, but it is not demanded as a condition which man in his own strength has to fulfil. For this he is not at all capable of doing in his sinful condition (compare Ques. 8). It also does not say, therefore, in Question 20 that man through faith incorporates himself, *i. e.*, engrafts himself into Christ, but that he is engrafted into Him by faith. Neither is it first mentioned that he appropriates the benefits of Christ according to his own pleasure, but that he is engrafted into Christ. Faith has reference to both being engrafted into Christ and to the appropriation of His benefits, but each in its order.

4. Faith does not ground itself in the will of man, and is not a work or an act of the same, but it is a work of the Spirit of God in the soul of man, whereby the will of the called sinner is constrained to receive Christ alone and entirely as the ground of righteousness and the source of life. 2 Thess. 3 : 2, Luke 13 : 24, John 3 : 27, John 3 : 8, Eph. 2 : 8, John 6 : 29.

5. Through faith we are incorporated into Christ, *i. e.*, engrafted into His body. We are to understand by this in the first place that we are brought inwardly, spiritually into most intimate fellowship with His person, and the consequence of this is that we are then also true members of His spiritual body, which is the communion of those who are redeemed and sanctified through Him. "Engrafted into Him" also points toward this, that the union with Christ is not mechanical, external, but organic, living. As the living sap flows from the stem into the branches which grow upon the tree and into those which are grafted upon it, and as the blood is conveyed from the heart, the centre of the human organism, through the veins into the members of the body as a living power, and as all the members are held together by the sinews and joints, so life proceeds from Christ only to those who are incorporated into Him. John 15 : 5, Eph. 5 : 30, Eph. 4 : 15, 16

In explanation of the idea of engrafting, the picture in Rom. 11 : 17 may also be adduced, according to which wild branches are engrafted upon the noble olive tree, and through the impartation of its sap they also then bear noble fruit. This kind of ennobling, or rather regeneration, renewing of the olive tree is to-day yet customary in the East.

6. In like manner we receive through faith only, wrought by the Holy Ghost, the benefits of Christ, *viz.*, forgiveness of sin, righteousness and eternal life ; for the natural man has neither understanding of nor pleasure in these. 1 Cor. 2 : 14, John 1 : 12, Acts 26 : 18.

7. Not all is gold that glitters and not all is faith that is so called or accepted as such. A four-fold false faith is to be distinguished :

a) An imaginary or self-constituted faith. Matt. 7 : 21-23, 2 Tim. 3 : 5 ; 4 : 3, 4.

b) An historical or intellectual faith *i. e.*, the mere formal appropriation of the proclamation of salvation and the mere knowledge of it. Acts 26 : 27, James 2 : 19.

c) A temporal faith, *i. e.*, the assent to the truth, but without remaining constant in it. Luke 8 : 13, John 6 : 66, Heb. 6 : 4-6.

d) A faith in miracles, *i. e.*, a faith that works miracles without being alive in love. 1 Cor. 13 : 2, Matt. 7 : 22, 23.

8. By true faith alone we are engrafted into Christ and receive all His benefits. As examples, we have the believing thief on the cross, Luke 23 : 42, 43 ; the refusal and the acceptance of the invitation in the parable of the Great Supper, Luke 14 : 16-24 ; the lack of the wedding garment in the parable of the wedding of the king's son, Matt. 22 : 1-14. After establishing in Question 20 that we are saved by faith only, Question

21 treats of how faith must be constituted, or of its nature; and Questions 22 and 23 of what is to be believed, or of the contents of faith.

Question 21.

What is true faith?

True faith is not only a certain knowledge, whereby I hold for truth all that God has revealed to us in his word, but also an assured confidence, which the Holy Ghost works by the Gospel in my heart; that not only to others, but to me also, remission of sin, everlasting righteousness, and salvation, are freely given by God, merely of grace, only for the sake of Christ's merits.

In ordinary speech we distinguish between believing anything and believing in a person. The former has reference to holding anything for truth, the latter to trust in a person. Merely to hold for truth what some one has stated is blind faith. To a true faith in divine things belongs above all the knowledge of the truth and conviction of the same because God has revealed it. Thus we distinguish also in true faith, 1. The knowledge and acceptance of the divine truth, that we believe what has been revealed to us; and 2. Such confidence in God and personal surrender to Him that we believe on Him (place our confidence in Him and enter into His fellowship).

I. True Faith is a Certain Knowledge.

A) KNOWLEDGE.

1. If we are to believe on God, we must first know Him as the true God; what we are to apprehend we must first know; but we can only learn to know and to apprehend the true God when He reveals Himself to us, *i. e.*, manifests and makes Himself known to us. He has revealed Himself to us in creation. Rom. 1; 19, 20. But that we have not only an almighty, but also a merciful God, who saves the sinner, we know only from the revelation in His Word, and through Jesus Christ,

His only begotten Son. 2 Tim. 3: 15, 16, John 9: 35, 36.

2. A certain knowledge, in the Latin translation of the Catechism "*certa notitia*," does not refer so much to a particular kind of knowledge, but to an exact, definite, firm knowledge, even as the revelation of God in His Word is clear and definite. 2 Peter 1: 19, John 4: 42, compare also v. 10, "If thou knewest the gift of God," etc.

B) ASSENT OR ACCEPTANCE.

1. The human understanding can search the Word of God and learn to know it as any other book, but it attains only a knowledge of the letter, and will never come to the knowledge of the truth of itself, without the working of the Holy Ghost. 1 Cor. 2: 14. But through the testimony of the Holy Ghost we come to the conviction that God's Word is the truth; we not merely recognize God's Word, but also hold it as true, recognize it as the truth, assent to it and approve of it, and thereby become free from the doubts which the world and our own flesh excite against the Word of God. 1 Cor. 2: 13, John 8: 32, 1 John 2: 27.

2. It belongs also to a true faith that one not merely accepts and holds as true this and that which may be agreeable to one in the Word of God, but everything that God has revealed in it. The old Reformed principle is, the Word and the entire Word, and nothing but the Word. Acts 24: 14, I, Paul, believe all things which are written in the law and the prophets. For us there is yet to be added what has been written by the evangelists and apostles.

II. True Faith is a Hearty Confidence.

1. "Not alone"—"but also." This indicates that true faith consists in knowledge and confidence. The expression "not alone" does not put a slight estimate upon knowledge, but represents it as of equal worth with

confidence. At the same time it expresses the idea that knowledge, including recognition, does not in itself constitute true faith. That there necessarily belongs to it also an acknowledgment and acceptance of the truth and a trustful surrender to Him who is the truth. 1 Cor. 13; 2.

2. As we can not attain to true knowledge and acceptance of the revealed truth of ourselves, but only through the Holy Ghost, so also the confidence which is hearty, *i. e.*, coming from the heart and filling the whole heart, thus also certain and firm, can only be wrought in us by the Holy Ghost. This is accomplished as well through the power of the Holy Ghost residing in the Word of God itself as in the experience (John 7: 17) which we acquire under His direction. "Not only to others, but to me also," points to the fact that our relation of faith to God must be a personal one. The knowledge and the experience of salvation wrought by the Holy Ghost brings the certainty of salvation which alone gives to the heart perfect comfort, rest, peace and joy in life and in death.

a) HEARTY CONFIDENCE.—Rom. 10: 10, Heb. 11: 1, John 20: 29, 2 Cor. 4: 18. Among all the examples of faith in Holy Scripture, Abraham stands at the head, the father of all who believe (Rom. 4: 11). Rom. 4: 20, 21, Heb. 11: 17–19.

b) WHICH THE HOLY GHOST WORKS IN US.—Matt. 16: 17, Acts 16: 14, 1 Cor. 12: 3.

c) THROUGH THE GOSPEL.—Rom. 1: 16; 10: 17.

d) ASSURANCE OF SALVATION (TO ME ALSO).—Eph. 3: 12, 1 Tim. 1: 16, 2 Tim. 1: 12, Rom. 8: 28, 38, 39, 2 Peter 1: 10.

3. His benefits (Ques. 20) which we receive and accept in true faith are:

a) FORGIVENESS OF SINS.—Matt. 9: 2, Ps. 103: 1, 3.

b) EVERLASTING RIGHTEOUSNESS.—Dan. 9: 24, Acts 13: 39, Gal. 2: 20.

c) ETERNAL SALVATION.—John 6: 47; 10: 28; 12: 26, 2 Tim. 4: 7, 8.

4. The ground upon which rests the impartation of these benefits is, 1. His grace, and 2. The merit of Christ. In that it happens merely of, *i. e.*, (pure, free) grace and only for the sake of Christ's merits, all personal merit, also a possible merit of faith itself, is absolutely excluded and the recognition of this actual relation in true faith is included.

a) MERELY OF GRACE.—Eph. 1: 7; 2: 8.

b) ONLY FOR THE SAKE OF CHRIST'S MERITS. — Rom. 3: 24, Eph. 2: 9.

5. The end of faith is to receive Christ wholly and alone in the heart and to retain Him in it constantly. There is a growth, steps of faith. Rom. 1: 17, Col. 1: 11, Eph. 4: 15; 4: 13. There is a weak faith and a strong faith. A weak faith may also be true faith, when it is otherwise of the right kind. A fire is not at once a bright blazing flame, but it often starts with a single spark. Mark 9: 24, Luke 17: 5, Phil. 1: 6, Heb. 12: 2. But from weak faith is to be distinguished an objectionable faint-hearted faith. Matt. 14: 31, Luke 24: 25. Paul received a strong faith. Acts 9: 20, 22. It is a strong faith that overcomes the world and death. Acts 6: 10, 1 John 5: 4, 1 Cor. 15: 55. The strong faith which characterized the martyrs of early Christianity and of the time of the Reformation is the result of the certainty of election in Christ. Mark 13: 22, 2 Peter 1: 10.

6. Dangers threaten true faith from all sides, from within and from without.

From within (from the flesh, through the temptation of the devil) arises doubt. It overthrew the faith of

Eve with the words "Did God indeed say?" James 1 : 6.

From without the world, steeped in unbelief and superstition, assails faith. It derides true faith as childish. But the Lord said (Matt. 11 : 25), I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, etc. Matt. 18 : 3. True faith is said to be in conflict with enlightenment. This is said by those of whom the Scriptures say that their understanding is darkened * * * through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart. Eph. 4 : 18, 2 Cor. 4 : 4. True faith is said to be irreconcilable with culture. Then culture is false. And so it is. That which the world commonly calls culture is directed merely toward that which is earthly both in body and in spirit and leaves the heart empty. 2 Cor. 3 : 18. To be transformed into the image of Christ who is the image of God, that is the highest culture. It is said that true faith offends against the spirit of the times. What the latter is, a prophet of the world (Goethe) has excellently said "that which you call the spirit of the times is in reality the spirit of the men themselves." This *Zeitgeist* changes with the people and the times. 2 Cor. 3 : 18, Heb. 13 : 8, Phil. 3 : 20, Heb. 12 : 28.

We are not to allow ourselves to be led away, or to be frightened from true faith. Zwingli says, "Not to fear is the best defence." Scripture warns and admonishes. 2 Peter 3 : 17, 1 Tim. 1 : 18, 19. We also have firm ground under our feet ; the others have not. John 4 : 22, Heb. 10 : 39, Prov. 18 : 10. Emperor William I. of Germany (died March 9, 1888) confessed on his death bed : The name of the Lord has been my help.

Question 22.

What is then necessary for a Christian to believe?

All things promised us in the gospel, which the articles of our Catholic, undoubted Christian faith briefly teach us.

1. True faith is based upon the promises of the gospel, and these are also its object and contents. Acts 24 : 14, John 3 : 33.

2. The gospel, or the Word of God, is on this account the only rule of faith. Isa. 30 : 21, Deut. 28 : 14. All the statutes and institutions of men are excluded, even the so-called oral traditions of the apostles. Hence also the Apostles' Creed cannot be placed on the same level with the Holy Scriptures. It is merely a summary of the most important facts and doctrines of salvation contained in the Scriptures.

3. A creed is also called a "symbol," which signifies a watchword, by which soldiers recognize each other, or a standard around which they rally.

4. It is called catholic, because, as the oldest confession of faith, it is accepted by all Christian Churches, and forms a bond of union between them.

5. Undoubted, i. e., beyond all doubt, because its articles are based upon the Holy Scriptures.

6. It is called Christian, because it embraces the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith, without the recognition of which no one can lay claim to the name of Christian.

7. It is finally called the Apostles' Creed. It received this name because the Church prior to the Reformation, believed, and the Church of to-day, outside of the Protestant (Roman and Greek), believes that it was composed by the Apostles before they departed from Jerusalem to go into all the world. This is an unfounded tradition. The catechism very wisely has not taken up with this designation, in order that it might not create misappre-

hension. The creed might be called apostolic, inasmuch as its articles, although not composed by the Apostles themselves, are grounded upon their writings. It originated in the first centuries after Christ, by a gradual expansion of the baptismal formula (Matt. 28: 19), or of the answers to the questions in baptism, the so-called baptismal confession. The article "He descended into hell," was added at the latest in the sixth or seventh century. The baptismal confession, as it was used by our forefathers, reads as follows: Q. Dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty? A. I believe in God the Father Almighty. Q. Dost thou believe in Christ, the Son of God? A. I believe in Christ, the Son of God. Q. Dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost? A. I believe in the Holy Ghost.

8. The creed of the Reformed Church in Germany and in the United States, is besides this the Palatinate or Heidelberg Catechism. The Reformed Churches in other countries have their own confessions, which, however, fully agree with our catechism. The latter was also recognized at the Synod of Dort (1618) by all the representatives of the different Reformed Churches.

THE HOLY TRINITY.

Question 23

What are these articles?

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth: And in Jesus Christ his only begotten Son our Lord: Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost: Born of the Virgin Mary: Suffered under Pontius Pilate: Was crucified, dead and buried: He descended in Hell: The third day he rose from the dead: He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty: From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost: I believe in the Holy Catholic Church: The Communion of saints: The Forgiveness of Sins: The Resurrection of the Body: And the life everlasting. Amen.

Question 24.*How are these articles divided ?*

Into three parts: the first is of God the Father, and our creation; the second of God the Son, and our redemption; the third of God the Holy Ghost, and our sanctification.

1. The creed is divided into twelve articles, and these, according to their inner connection, are grouped into three parts.

2. The division is in accord with the three persons of the one Divine Being therein confessed, (Matt. 28 : 19). Such acts are mentioned as are especially ascribed and attributed to each individual person. This does not mean that each of the three persons of the one Divine Being acted independently. The acts of the Holy Trinity are as indissoluble as the Trinity itself, and the distinction is made only to facilitate the clear exposition and explanation of the different acts, in the revelation of each of which one person appears prominently.

3. God the Father has created us—and the whole world (Gen. 1 : 1), by the Son (Gen. 1 : 3, John 1 : 1-3, 14, Col. 1 : 16), in union with the Holy Ghost (Gen. 1 : 2).

God the Son has redeemed us (1 Tim. 2 : 6), He being sent by the Father (John 3 : 16, Gal. 4 : 4), through the Holy Ghost (John 1 : 32).

God the Holy Ghost sanctifies us (effects our sanctification, i. e., our renewal. 2 Thess. 2 : 13), sent by the Father, (John 14 : 16, 17), and by the Son (John 16 : 7).

Question 25.*Since there is but one divine essence, why speakest thou of Father, Son and Holy Ghost ?*

Because God hath so revealed himself in his word that these three distinct persons are the only true and eternal God.

I. The One Divine Being in Three Persons.

1. The words “triune,” “trinity,” do not occur in the Bible, and the catechism, in conformity with its pure

biblical character, avoids the use of it. But it is a concise expression of the doctrine, which the catechism also presents on the basis of the divine revelation in the Scriptures as the fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith. The expression came into use in the doctrinal discussions of the first centuries, when the truth of Christian doctrine needed to be defended against heretics. The so-called Athanasian creed sums up the result in the following sentences :

And the true Christian faith is this : That we worship one God in trinity, and trinity in unity ; neither confounding the persons : nor dividing the substance.

For there is one person of the Father : another of the Son : and another of the Holy Ghost. But the godhead of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy is all one : the glory equal, the majesty eternal.

Such as the Father is : such is the Son : and such the Holy Ghost.

The Father uncreated : the Son uncreated : and the Holy Ghost uncreated.

The Father unlimited : the Son unlimited : and the Holy Ghost unlimited.

The Father eternal : the Son eternal : and the Holy Ghost eternal. And yet there are not three eternals, but one eternal. As also there are not three uncreated, nor three infinities, but one uncreated and one infinite.

So likewise the Father is almighty : the Son almighty : and the Holy Ghost almighty. And yet there are not three Almightyies : but one Almighty.

So the Father is God : the Son is God : and the Holy Ghost is God. And yet there are not three Gods : but one God.

So likewise the Father is Lord : the Son Lord : and the Holy Ghost Lord. And yet not three Lords : but one Lord.

For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge every Person by Himself to be God and Lord : So we are forbidden by the Christian faith so say there are three Gods or three Lords.

The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten.

The Son is of the Father alone, not made nor created, but begotten.

The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son, neither made nor begotten, but proceeding.

So there is one Father, not three Fathers ; one Son, not three Sons ; one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts.

And in this Trinity none is afore or after another ; none is greater nor less than another. But the whole three Persons are coeternal and coequal.

So that in all things, as aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped.

The Latin word *persona* does not expressly occur in the Bible, but an expression which means the same thing is found in Heb. 1 : 3, “ the express image of his person.” By person we understand a self-conscious and independent being, who by His own power can say “ I.” It is self-evident that this human mode of speech is a defective representation of the Divine Being, as God Himself cannot be defined (limited, ideally represented), because He is unlimited, and to comprehend Him perfectly, surpasses man’s power of thought. God dwells in thick darkness (1 Kings 8 : 12), and God dwells in light which no man can approach unto (1 Tim. 6 : 16), have the same meaning, namely that God’s Being cannot be comprehended by man, who can know God only in so far as He is pleased to reveal Himself.

2. The invisible God we can know only from His revelation of Himself. There are three modes of divine revelation :

a) *Creation.* Rom. 1 : 19, 20, Heb. 3 : 4.

b) *Conscience.* Rom. 2 : 14, 15.

c) From creation we can learn in general, that there is a God, and that He is omnipotent and all-wise ; from conscience, that there is a holy and just God, who hates and punishes evil. But these modes of cognition do not lead us any further. Only the revelation contained in *His Word* enables us to attain a full knowledge of God, in so far as this is possible to man, (Ex. 32 : 18-23), without the last veil being lifted. This will take place when we shall pass from faith to sight, and shall see God face to face (1 Cor. 13 : 12).

3. God has revealed His Being in His Word.

a) By His names.

b) By the testimony of the Spirit.

a) The most important names are : God, Jehovah, Sabaoth, Lord. God or Elohim expresses the fullness of all perfection ; Jehovah, His eternal and unchangeable Being ; Sabaoth, the fulness of His power, and Lord, the possession of highest, unlimited power, His sovereignty.

b) The testimony of the Spirit :

I. God is one. He in Himself is one and is the only true God, besides whom there is none other (Deut. 6 : 4, Mark 12 : 29). It was the high calling of Israel among all nations to preserve the knowledge of the one true God. (Isa. 43 : 11, Hosea 13 : 4, Isa. 42 : 8, 1 Cor, 8 : 4-6).

II. God is a Spirit. He is perfect in His attributes, and unlimited. He penetrates and fills all things (John 4 : 24).

III. God is light. He is the Fountain of all wisdom. (1 John 1 : 5, James 1 : 17).

IV. God is love. He does not wrap himself up in Himself, but communicates Himself and His gifts ; from Him alone comes all true love. (1 John 4 : 16).

V. God is life. He alone is the living One and the

Fountain of all life. (John 5 : 26, John 14 : 6, Jer. 10 : 10).

4. Especially has God thus revealed Himself in His Word that these three distinct persons (Father, Son and Holy Ghost) are the only true eternal God.

a) The Trinity is foreshadowed in the Old Testament, but the knowledge thereof is veiled. (Gen. 1 : 1, 2, 3, John 1 : 1-3, Ps. 33 : 6, Numb. 6 : 24-26, Isa. 6 : 3, Isa. 48 : 16).

b) The Trinity is clearly revealed in the New Testament. (Matt. 3 : 16, 17, Matt. 28 : 19, Acts 20 : 28, 2 Cor. 13 : 14, 1 Peter 1 : 2).

5. Personality, i. e., distinct self-consciousness and independence (the Ego) of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is clearly seen in the following passages of Scripture, in which are ascribed to each of the three, personal attributes, understanding and will, as well as separate acts and different names (Father, Son and Holy Ghost). The succession is determined by the time of their special revelation (creation, redemption, sanctification).

a) God the Father. He is the invisible One. (Eph. 4 : 6, Matt. 3 : 17, John 14, 16).

b) God the Son. He is the One who reveals. In the Old Testament the angel of the Lord with Abraham and Moses, the cloud in the desert, and in the Holy of Holies, the face of God (Ex. 3), the rock which followed them (1 Cor. 10 : 4). In the New Testament, John 1 : 18, Matt. 11 : 27, John 1 : 1, 14, John 5 : 26, Heb. 1 : 3, 1 John 3 : 8, John 10 : 30, Acts 9 : 5.

c) God the Holy Ghost. He is the Mediator through whom God communicates Himself (John 14 : 26, Acts 5 : 3, 4, Acts 10 : 19, 20, Acts 13 : 2, 1 Cor. 12 : 11).

6. The three persons in the Godhead are one in essence, but there is a distinction in their acts. They are distinct, but not separate. If one were to ask how it is

possible that one equals three and three equals one, the answer would be, the incomprehensible God is not an arithmetical problem. The Trinity is not contrary to reason, but above reason ; and notwithstanding the revelation which we have, will forever remain for us, (who are limited in our understanding of the divine relations,) an unfathomable secret, which we believe without making it the object of subtle inquiry (Rom. 11 : 33).

7. The doctrine of the Holy Trinity is fundamental in the Christian faith. It distinguishes Christianity essentially on the one hand from the rigid monotheism of the Jews and of Mohammedanism, and on the other hand from the deification of the universe, and the polytheism of the heathen.

II. The Attributes of God.

It is customary to treat the attributes of God in connection with question 25. A mere enumeration and definition of them is, however, not sufficient. Instruction must use them for admonition as well as for comfort, and must be enlivened by the introduction of biblical history and suitable stanzas or hymns. It may also be recommended that the children be encouraged to look up illustrations in the biblical history with which they are familiar, thereby inducing them to make practical use of the Word of God.

1. The Being of God does not divide itself in His attributes, as a whole may be separated into its parts ; for these " attributes " are only the effulgence, the manifestations of His Being in different relations, as the same light of the sun manifests itself in the different colors of the rainbow.

2. We distinguish the attributes of God :

a. In His relation to the world.

b. In His relation to man.

c. In His relation to Himself.

A Relation of God to the World.

1. OMNIPOTENCE.—God has made everything. And creates at all times what He wills. Gen. 17: 1, Isa. 40: 26, Ps. 33: 9, Ps. 115: 3, Luke 1: 37.

a) Admonition: That we humble ourselves before God. Matt. 10: 28. The humility of Abraham, the “friend” of God. Gen. 18: 27.

b) Comfort: That we trust under all circumstances in the protection and help of God. 1 Sam. 14: 6. Gideon with his small army. Judges 7.

2. OMNIPRESENCE.—God is and works everywhere at the same time, and nothing can circumscribe or limit Him, who is immeasurable. Ps. 139: 7–10, Jer. 23: 23, 24, 1 Kings 8: 27.

a) Admonition: That we so fear God as not to be willing to sin even in secret. The temptation of Joseph. Gen. 39: 11.

b) Comfort: That we are everywhere and at all times in the hand of God. Matt. 28: 20, Isa. 43: 1–3, Gen. 28: 15.

3. OMNISCIENCE.—God knows all things, past as well as present and future, and He sees even the most hidden thoughts of the heart. Acts 15: 18, Ps. 139: 16, 1–4.

a) Admonition: That we at all times are mindful of the fact that the eyes of God are upon us. Ps. 14: 2, Josh. 7: 13.

b) Comfort: That we are persuaded that all our inner and outer wants are known unto God. Matt. 6: 32, Rev. 2: 9, 1 Kings 17: 8–16.

4. ALL-WISE.—In the creation and government of the world, no less than in the guidance of His children, the ends which God seeks, and the means which He employs, are the best. Ps. 104: 24, Isa. 28: 29; 55: 9, Rom. 16: 27.

a) *Admonition*: That we are not to be perplexed by His Providence, even if we do not understand it, and that we are not obstinately to choose our own ways. John 13: 7, Isa. 57: 10, Acts 10: 9-17, 34; 11: 12.

b) *Comfort*: That we fully trust in the guidance of God in the smallest things, as well as in the greatest. Ps. 37: 5; 73: 24, Gen. 50: 20.

B—Relation of God to Man.

5. HOLINESS.—God Himself is without the least spot or stain. He loves the good and hates the evil. Deut. 32: 4, Hab. 1: 13, 1 Peter 1: 16, Ps. 5: 4.

a) *Admonition*: That we be filled with holy reverence of God and abhor sin. Matt. 6: 9, 1 Peter 3: 15, Exod. 19: 10.

b) *Comfort*: The Lord Himself by Jesus Christ takes away the uncleanness which separates us from His holiness. Ezek. 36: 25, 29, John 17: 19, 1 John 1: 7, Luke 7: 36-50.

6. RIGHTEOUSNESS.—God Himself does right in all His acts. He punishes evil without respect of persons, and blesses those who are devoted to Him in Christ and live according to His good pleasure. Ps. 145: 17, Rom. 2: 6, 11, Ps. 5: 12, Matt. 10: 41, Luke 6: 23.

a) *Admonition*: That we fear to provoke the righteous anger of God by our sins, and that we seek after His righteousness. Heb. 12: 29, Matt. 6: 33. The disobedience of Israel. Num. 14: 35.

b) *Comfort*: That Christ has rendered full satisfaction to the justice of God; that we through faith have the righteousness which avails before God; and that in Him we are and remain blest of God. Rom. 4: 5; 3: 26, 1 Chron. 17: 27, 1 Peter 3: 9. The blessing of Abraham. Gen. 22: 16-18.

7. GOODNESS, GRACE AND MERCY, PATIENCE AND LONGSUFFERING.—All these are manifestations of the

love of God. Exod. 34 : 6. His goodness, *i. e.*, His benevolence as Creator, extends to all men. Ps. 145 : 9, Matt. 5 : 45. His grace and mercy, *i. e.*, His undeserved love in forgiving sin, He bestows only upon the elect. Rom. 9 : 15. His patience and longsuffering are the forbearance which He exercises toward unconverted sinners and toward His weak children. 1 Peter 3 : 20, 9.

a) Admonition : That we do not despise God's goodness, patience and longsuffering (Rom. 2 : 4), nor wantonly abuse His grace by sinning against knowledge. Jude 4, Heb. 10 : 26. The flood. Gen. 6 : 3, 7 ; 7 : 23.

b) Comfort : That we may comfort ourselves in the presence of all the attacks of sin, and of all evils. Ps. 32 : 10, 2 Cor. 12 : 9, 2 Peter 3 : 15. The parable of the prodigal son. Luke 15.

8. TRUTH AND FAITHFULNESS.—God is the source of all truth, and His Word inviolable. Ps. 33 : 4, Num. 23 : 19, 1 Thess. 5 : 24.

a) Admonition : That we acknowledge that God alone is true ; that all men (as long as they are not of the truth) are liars (Ps. 116 : 11), and that we obediently walk in the truth. John 17 : 17, 3 John 4. Ananias and Sapphira. Acts 5.

b) Comfort : That in every temptation we are certain that God keeps forever the covenant of His grace with His elect. Isa. 54 : 10, Luke 18 : 7, 2 Thess. 3 : 3, 1 Cor. 10 : 13. The parable of the lost sheep. Luke 15. God's covenant with Abraham, Jacob, and the people of Israel.

C—Relation of God to Himself.

9. ETERNITY AND UNCHANGEABLENESS. — God is without beginning or end. He remains forever the same in His being, decrees and acts. Ps. 90 : 2–4, James 1 : 17.

a) Admonition: That we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. The witnesses of the faith. Heb. 11: 13, 14.

b) Comfort: That we are renewed after the image of the eternal God for eternity. Heb. 12: 28, Rev. 22: 5.

10. ALL-SUFFICIENCY AND BLESSEDNESS.—God possesses in Himself from eternity the fullness of all perfection. Acts 17: 24, 25, 1 Tim. 6: 15.

a) Admonition: That we seek in Him alone our salvation. Isa. 45: 22.

b) Comfort: That we find in and through God the fullness of satisfaction. Ps. 73: 25, 26.

11. GLORY AND MAJESTY.—The being and the power of God are exalted over all, and incomparable, incomprehensible, and yet traceable in all His works and ways. Ps. 104: 1, Jer. 10: 6, Num. 14: 21. The glory and majesty of God enveloped Moses. Exod. 33. Isaiah and John saw them in vision. Isa. 6, Rev. 1. Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God, our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen. Jude 24, 25.

OF GOD THE FATHER.

Question 26

What believest thou when thou sayest, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of Heaven and Earth?"

That the eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (who of nothing made heaven and earth, with all that is in them, who likewise upholds and governs the same by his eternal counsel and providence,) is for the sake of Christ his Son, my God and my Father; on whom I rely so entirely, that I have no doubt but he will provide me with all things necessary for body and soul; and further,

that he will make whatever evils he sends upon me in this valley of tears turn out to my advantage; for he is able to do it, being Almighty God, and willing, being a faithful Father.

What are we to understand by this, that God is called "Father," "Almighty" and "Creator?" In the exposition of true faith "certain knowledge" is first.

A—God the Father.

1. God is called Father, because he is the eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the only true God who has revealed Himself as Father in Christ Jesus through the Holy Ghost. Eph. 1: 3, John 17: 3.

2. God is the Father of Jesus Christ, not from the time of His incarnation and temporal birth, but He is His eternal Father, *i. e.*, from eternity before all creatures, and the Son of God is of like eternal being as the Father. Col. 1: 15, John 17: 5.

B—The Almighty.

1. In the Apostles' Creed the first article ought to be translated: I believe in God the Father, the Almighty, creator of heaven and earth, the way in which it is given in the first and oldest editions of the Heidelberg Catechism. In the middle ages, *e. g.*, in the baptismal confession, which the Franks and Saxons used, the word "Almighty" was joined to Father to qualify it, and later to "Creator," which is now the general usage.

2. Omnipotence is the power of God which He manifests in His works. Jer. 32: 17.

C—The Creator of Heaven and Earth.

1. God created the heavens and the earth, with all that is in them, out of nothing. To create means to bring forth something out of nothing, *i. e.*, without the presence of matter, and without the use of implements by a mere act of the will. To make, on the contrary,

means to fashion something out of matter and with implements. When “create” is used of men, it relates either to the spiritual sphere or to the construction of a great work; and when “make” is used of God, it is in the sense of create. Heb. 11: 3, Rom. 4: 17.

2. By “the heavens and the earth and all that is in them” we understand the whole world, the visible and the invisible.

3. Heaven (in the Hebrew, Gen. 1: 1, the heavens) signifies in the Scriptures not only the visible firmament, or the space in which innumerable heavenly bodies move, but also the place (1 Kings 8: 27) in which the unveiled glory of God manifests itself, and in which the created, unfallen spirits, the angels, are present in countless multitudes. Therefore God is called the Lord of Sabaoth, that is, the Lord of Hosts. Gen. 32: 1, 2, Dan. 7: 10, Luke 2: 13.

The creation of the invisible heavens preceded the creation of the earth, atmosphere, and the starry firmament. The angels who inhabit it were created by God pure and holy spirits; but some fell away from God, and therefore holy angels are spoken of and fallen angels, or devils, who did not continue in the truth.

a) The good or holy angels (the word angel signifies messenger, ambassador) are pure spirits, who are constantly in the presence and service of God. Matt. 18: 10, Ps. 103: 20. As such their activity extends throughout the entire creation, and the Scriptures know nothing of the reign of blind, natural forces. Ps. 104: 4, Heb. 1: 7, John 5: 4. (Healing power was exerted each time by the angel in the pool.)

Especially are angels active, in accordance with the divine will and command, in behalf of the kingdom of God on earth.

1. In its preparatory state—in the lives of the patriarchs, the judges and the prophets; at the giving of the law. Acts 7: 53.

2. At its appearance—in the life of Christ. Luke 1 : 26 ; 2 : 8, 13, Matt. 4 : 11, John 1 : 51, Luke 22 : 43, Matt. 28 : 2, Acts 1 : 10. In the lives of the Apostles. Acts 5 : 19 ; 8 : 26 (Philip) ; 12 : 7 (Peter) ; 27 : 23 (Paul).

3. For the service and protection of its members. Heb. 1 : 14, Ps. 91 : 11, 12, Matt. 18 : 10.

4. At its completion—in Christ's second coming. Matt. 24 : 31 ; 13 : 41.

b) The evil or fallen angels. Their head is the devil. (The word is derived from the Greek and means the same as slanderer.) He is also called satan (Job 2 : 7, Matt. 4 : 10), *i. e.*, enemy, adversary ; tempter (Matt. 4 : 3) ; Prince of this world (John 14 : 30) ; liar, father of lies and murderers (John 8 : 44) ; Belial, *i. e.*, the destroyer (2 Cor. 6 : 15) ; accuser (Rev. 12 : 10) ; the old serpent (Rev. 20 : 2). The evil spirits are also called devils after him. Their power was especially manifest during the time of the activity of the Son of God upon earth ; compare the demoniacs.

The devil opposes the kingdom of God unto the end (Rev. 20 : 10), in that he provokes the members to apostasy and the enemies to malice. Luke 22 : 31, 1 Peter 5 : 8, 9, Eph. 6 : 11 ; 2 : 2, 2 Tim. 2 : 26, 2 Cor. 4 : 4. The judgment against the devil and his angels is eternal damnation. 2 Peter 2 : 4.

4. The creation of the heavens and the earth or of the visible world. The origination of the world of itself is impossible. Here the proverb is true, "out of nothing, nothing comes," *i. e.*, of itself. The world was created by the almighty will of God, and by the word (John 1 : 1, 2, 14) in which He reveals Himself. The biblical account of the creation, (Gen. 1 : 1, 2) gives us over against all the conjectures of modern Natural Science, the most simple and certain information as to the origin of the world. We shall scarcely err if we

refer this account to a revelation of God made to Adam, since we find echoes of the same among the oldest nations, the Babylonians and Assyrians.

a) In the beginning does not mean when God had a beginning, but when the world began. In the creation time had its beginning, and with the creation, finite space had its beginning in the universe.

b) The earth was void and without form. God first called into being matter, the material out of which worlds are made, out of which He formed in His six days' work the worlds, and among them the earth, with all that is in it, even the most minute created forms. In our planetary system the earth is the smallest body, but its creation is so minutely described because this revelation was made for its inhabitants. For this reason it appears in the account as the centre of creation. But in that which is least God would glorify himself most, and this has been accomplished by the incarnation of the Son of God upon this small world.

c) The creation of the world has its ground, not in a necessity lying outside of God, but in His free counsel and will. The end for which He created it is His honor and glory.

d) God created the world in six days. That a day of creation was a period of twenty-four hours is not explicitly stated, and if we understand by day a period of creation, we do not in the least detract from the omnipotence of the Creator. God could have called forth, had He so desired, in the twinkling of an eye the whole world complete in every detail. Ps. 90: 4. Modern geological science assumes periods of evolution of thousands of years in the formation of the earth's surface. With the present results of geological researches, agrees also the biblical account of the order of creation. The Bible says: The earth was void and without form and darkness covered the deep. Geology says: In the be-

ginning there were neither mountains nor continents. The earth was everywhere covered by the ocean, and a thick, impenetrable atmosphere enveloped it. The Bible says: Then the dry land appeared. Geology says: Gradually there emerged from the ocean slight elevations and marshy stretches of land. The Bible says: Then God created vegetation. Geology says: There followed an enormous development of large-sized plants, which are yet preserved to us in the form of coal. The Bible says: Only then did God cause the sun and moon to appear. Geology says: The uniform distribution of vegetation over the entire earth proves that at that time warmth and light were distributed differently from now, and that probably no change of seasons occurred. The Bible says: After vegetation God created fishes and birds. Geology says: After the carboniferous era followed immense numbers of creeping saurians, or animals, that swim in the water. At the same time there appeared also the first denizens of the air. The Bible says: Then were created four-footed animals. Geology says: With the cretaceous period there appeared four-footed animals and mammals. The Bible says: Lastly man was created. Geology says: It is firmly established that during the carboniferous age, and at the time of the saurians, and the cretaceous formation, man did not yet exist upon the earth. Geology draws its conclusions from the examination of the earth's crust, and from the discoveries thus made, without finding in the lifeless fossils the living God, as the Creator. As such, however, the Holy Scriptures, God's revelation in the living Word, teaches us to know Him.

e) There is a correspondence between the first three and the last three days. On the first day God created the light, and on the fourth the heavenly luminaries, the starry firmament; on the second He divided the

waters above (the clouds) and the waters below (the sea) by the atmosphere, and on the fifth He created fishes and birds, the animals that live in the water and those that live in the air; on the third day the dry land and the vegetable world, and on the sixth the land animals and man.

f) The order of creation is from the lower to the higher: first the mineral kingdom (lifeless bodies), then the vegetable kingdom (life without free movement), and lastly the animal kingdom (animated bodies). But where does man belong? King Frederick William IV. of Prussia was once visiting a school. He showed his gold ring with a precious stone on his finger and asked: "To which of the three natural kingdoms does this belong?" "To the mineral kingdom," was the answer. Then he drew an orange from his pocket and asked: "Where does this belong?" "To the vegetable kingdom," they replied. And pointing to a bird, "Where this?" "To the animal kingdom," the children exclaimed. "But," added the king, "Where do I belong?" Then a little girl raised her finger, and with a clear voice said: "To the heavenly kingdom." The eyes of the pious king filled with tears, and he took the child in his arms and kissed it. It is true, man does not belong to the animal kingdom, although his body has much in common with the animal. He has not been developed from the animal by a process of evolution. On the contrary, God formed his body in a special manner, different from that of the animal creation, and breathed into him the breath of life, thus constituting him a living soul. And because he is created in the image of Him who dwells in heaven, he also belongs to the heavenly kingdom. The soul of man is distinguished from that of the animal, in that it is spirit, *i. e.*, possesses the spiritual powers of thought and will. The reason (*Vernunft*), which dis-

tinguishes man essentially from the animal, is a psychical power, and when enlightened by the Holy Ghost, has power to discern spiritual things. Therefore the name (*Vernunft* from *Vernehmen*), *i. e.*, to know.

5. The omnipotence of God is not limited to the creation, but is also manifested in the preservation and government of the world, which is comprehended by the word *Providence*. The creation of the world is not like the mechanism of a watch, which is wound up and then allowed to run its appointed time. But God works uninterruptedly in its preservation and government, by the same living power with which He created it. "Through His eternal counsel and *Providence*." The counsel of God is the plan, according to which He made the world. (*Acts 15: 18.*) His *Providence* is His continued influence upon the same. *Providence* is, accordingly, an activity of God, but not God Himself; therefore we should not use the word *Providence*, when to His honor God's name ought to be employed.

a) God upholds the world, *i. e.*, God maintains the whole creation as long as He wills that it shall continue, or He works by His almighty and everywhere present power, so that the world continues to exist. *Ps. 148: 6, Heb. 1: 3.*

b) God governs the world, *i. e.*, God directs all events and changes in the world, so that all things at last fulfil their divine purpose, or He works through His almighty and everywhere present power, so that all things in the world continue according to His will. *Ps. 148: 6, Isa. 46: 10, 11, Lam. 3: 37.*

c) As little as the forces which God constituted the elements in creation work of themselves, so little do the laws (the so-called natural laws), according to which the ordinary course of nature proceeds, depend upon themselves. As lawgiver God stands above the laws which He has instituted, and no natural law can limit

His omnipotence or prevent Him from interrupting, according to His will, the ordinary course of nature, if at any time He wills to work otherwise. Such interference on the part of God we call miracles, and does not proceed contrary to nature, but above nature. Ps. 147: 5. How are we to understand that God is “my God and my Father?” In true faith there must be united with knowledge that is certain, *i. e.*, exact, an assured confidence. It is not enough to believe God, *i. e.*, to believe that He is and that He created the world. The language is: I believe in or on God, *i. e.*, I have a firm confidence in Him. Therefore the creed also does not say, we believe, but I believe in God, because every one who would be saved, must exercise for himself this assured confidence: I believe that God is my God and my Father.

1. God is in a certain sense the God and Father of all men, since in the beginning He created man after His own image, and continues to uphold all men. At the same time the world, which has fallen away from God, is lost, and only those are saved who are ingrafted into Christ by true faith, and who, by means of renewal after His image, again attain divine Sonship. “I believe that the eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ—for the sake of His Son Jesus Christ—is my God and my Father.” Eph. 1: 5, 6, John 20: 17, Rom. 8: 14, 2 Cor. 6: 16, 18. Our heathen ancestors named their chief Deity (Wodan) “All-Father;” and there is just as much heathen folly to-day in representing the living God as only such an all-world Father; in the real sense of the word, He is not a World-Father, but in and through Christ only “our and my Father.”

2. Only the immeasurable love which God manifested toward us in Christ (John 3: 16), can awaken such confidence, “that I have no doubt.” The child-like confidence of faith excludes all doubt and uncertainty. Ps. 118: 8, Rom. 4: 20, 21.

3. The divine Providence and care which are specially manifested toward the children of God, consist in their preservation and government.

a) God preserves me, in that He provides for me all things necessary for body and soul. The needs of the body, especially food and clothing, we call our daily bread; the need of the soul is the Word of God, the bread of life, and heavenly gifts. Out of proper confidence in God there arises freedom from anxiety (Phil. 4 : 6, 1 Peter 5 : 7) and contentment (1 Tim. 6 : 6-8). God not only in times past wrought miracles necessary for the preservation of His own people (for individuals, as in the case of Noah and Elijah, and for His people, as in the case of Israel in the desert), but His arm is not shortened, that He cannot help marvellously.

b) God rules over me, in that "He will make whatever evils He sends upon me in this valley of tears, turn out to my advantage." God orders our ways and directs our steps in good and evil days, to the end that we may achieve our soul's salvation. Prosperity is not to make us presumptuous, and adversity is not to cause us to despair, but we are so to trust as not to doubt. Although the children of God have obtained forgiveness of sins, the world does not become a Paradise, but remains for them also a vale of tears, from which they look wistfully toward the heavenly Canaan, neither do they escape the evil that is in it. Evil, *i. e.*, all distress and suffering in their case is not a punishment for sin, but a discipline, *i. e.*, a means of correction in the hand of God; therefore evil redounds to their good. The life of Joseph is an example. Gen. 50 : 20, Heb. 12 : 11, Acts 14 : 22, Rom. 8 : 28.

4. Our confidence is based upon the omnipotence of God, for He can do all things, and upon His faithful love as a Father, for He will do it. Human help is unreliable; many could help, but are not willing;

many would help, but are not able. God is both able and willing. Luke 1 : 37, Ps. 103 : 13, Isa. 49 : 15, Jer. 31 : 20.

Question 27.

What dost thou mean by the providence of God ?

The almighty and everywhere present power of God ; whereby, as it were by his hand, he upholds and governs heaven, earth, and all creatures ; so that herbs and grass, rain and drought, fruitful and barren years, meat and drink, health and sickness, riches and poverty, yea all things come not by chance, but by his fatherly hand.

I. What is to be Understood by the Providence of God.

1. The name has its origin in Gen. 22 : 14 (according to the original), The Lord will provide, *i. e.*, will care for it. The Providence of God is, therefore, the divine provision for the present and the future. The Providence of God rests upon His omnipotence and omnipresence. Ps. 89 : 13, Isa. 40 : 26 ; 46 : 10, Acts 17 : 27, 28. Therefore the Providence of God, because it is the same power by which He created the world, may be looked upon as a continuous creation.

2. "As it were, by His hand," means that God not only works from beyond the visible world through laws and forces of nature, but personally and independently, so that He is not bound to the forces and laws, but at all times preserves His freedom. Job 12 : 10. The Scriptures often speak of the arm and the hand, the eyes and the ears of God. Not that God, who is a spirit, is like unto man, or that the men of God looked upon Him as human, but these are the figurative designations of the omnipotence (arm and hand) and the omnipresence (eyes and ears) of God.

II. To What the Providence of God Extends.

1. The Providence of God, according to which He preserves and governs the world, extends to all creatures, *i. e.*, to all that God has created, and whatever is

found in heaven and earth and hell. Ps. 139 : 8-10. It embraces the greatest as well as the smallest; the weal and the woe of all creatures. Evil also lies within the Providence of God. Amos 3 : 6, Isa. 45 : 7. In everything the aim is God's honor and glory, His kingdom and the salvation of His chosen ones.

2. We distinguish, *a*) a general Providence of God, which extends to external creation; *b*) special Providence, which extends to men; and *c*) a very special and minute Providence, which extends to the kingdom and children of God.

a) The general Providence of God. "Herbs and grass." The heavens—clouds—wind—sea—seasons—mountains—springs—grass and seedtime—wine and bread—sun and moon—day and night. Ps. 104 : 29, 30. "Rain and drought." Jer. 5 : 24. "Fruitful and barren years." Hos. 2 : 21, 22.

b) The special Providence of God concerns :

1. The bodily relations of men. "Food and drink." Ps. 145 : 15, 16, Acts 14 : 17, Ps. 104 : 15. "Health and sickness." Job 5 : 18, Ex. 15 : 26. As the sickness of individuals, so also war and pestilence and national calamities are in the hand of God. Jer. 14 : 12, Ps. 91 : 6. "Riches and poverty." 1 Sam. 2 : 7. (Example : Job 1 : 11 ; Solomon, 1 Kings 3 : 13.) Prov. 22 : 2.

2. The thoughts and devices of men. Prov. 21 : 1, Ps. 33 : 10, Prov. 16 : 9.

3. The external destiny of the human race. The history of the world is not the judgment of the world, but God's judgments appear in its history. Daniel 2 : 37-45 sets forth the grand outlines of God's ruling in the history of the world, and shows how God has provided for (not merely foreseen, but predetermined) the government of the kingdoms of the world : 1. The Assyro-Babylonian (Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar),

2. The Medo-Persian (Darius, Ahasuerus and Cyrus), 3. The Greco-Macedonian (Alexander), 4. The Roman Empire (Augustus), with its division into Eastern and Western. Upon the Roman Empire rest also the laws and culture of the kingdoms of the present day. Dan. 2: 43, Acts 17: 26.

c) The very special Providence of God relates to the kingdom of God, and to His children.

1. In the history of the kingdom. From the call of Abraham, the progenitor, until the leading out of the people from Egypt; the development of the public life of the people in the desert and the direction of the political life in Canaan; the Egyptians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Persians, Greeks and Romans as scourges of Israel in the hand of the Lord; then the appearance from heaven of the kingdom, for which Israel was the preparation. Dan. 2: 44, Hag. 2: 7. For the fulfilment of the prophecies, God made use of the Roman Empire and of its mightiest ruler, Augustus, and in accordance with His eternal counsel and Providence, the extension of His kingdom is carried forward through the work of missions. First, it spread from Jerusalem throughout Palestine; then into the Roman world, *i. e.*, the region around the Mediterranean Sea, and then throughout the whole world. The extension of God's kingdom follows the plan of campaign projected by King Immanuel. Acts 1: 8. The Providence of God in the preservation and government of His kingdom relates to its inner development (Reformation), and its protection against enemies (Jews, heathen and nominal Christians—the persecutions of the first centuries and of the time of the Reformation), as well as to its final consummation, as this is depicted in the revelation of St. John. Rev. 11: 15; 19: 6.

2. In the personal guidance of the children of God. In all their guidance we trace: Ye are blessed of the

Lord which made heaven and earth (Ps. 115: 15); but there shall not a hair of your head perish (Luke 21: 18); for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him (Rom. 10: 12).

The doctrine of the Providence of God does not exclude prayer or render it superfluous. It rather encourages prayer. He who said: Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things (Matt. 6: 32), admonishes us in the sermon on the Mount: Ask, and ye shall receive. Matt. 7: 7. God extends His protecting care over His own. Zech. 2: 8, Ps. 34: 7. When they are oppressed He provides for their deliverance. Luke 18: 7, Job 5: 19. Examples of divine guidance and Providence are Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David, Daniel.

3. The relation of the Providence of God to evil and to sin. God is not the author of evil, but He also controls the wicked; the evil purpose belongs to man, but whether he shall be allowed to execute it rests in the hand of God. In the government of the world divine Providence takes into account evil as a factor, without the wicked thereby becoming guiltless. Matt. 18: 7. Examples: Pharaoh, Ex. 7: 3; 9: 35; Shimei, 2 Sam. 16: 10; Judas, John 17: 12; the crucifixion of Christ, Luke 24: 46, Acts 4: 27, 28.

We may say: 1. God is not the cause of evil (of sin), neither does He prevent it (*e. g.*, Cain); 2. He controls it, in that He limits it (*e. g.*, the flood, the tower of Babel, Sennacherib, Jer. 36: 29), and punishes it by its own consequences (Rom. 1: 24, 26), and overrules the evil designs of the wicked to the good of His children (Joseph, Gen. 50: 19, 20).

4. We are also not to stumble at God's Providence by the fact that the wicked are often outwardly prosperous, and the righteous in distress. The question is, what is really good and what evil, *i. e.*, injurious. This

can only be determined by the results, the final outcome. The prosperity of the wicked renders them more secure and firm only in their wickedness, but their end is eternal destruction. The sufferings of the righteous purify them, drive them nearer to their God, and their end is eternal glory. The apparent contradiction in the above observation is specifically considered and solved in Psalm 73 and Mal. 3 : 14 ; 4 : 2. "Yea, all things come not by chance, but by his fatherly hand." There is neither a "law of necessity" nor "chance," neither "fate" nor "destiny," not even an "accident." Such expressions and conceptions are not found in the Scriptures, but have their origin in paganism. The Lord's hand is everywhere present; even where the event seems to come "by chance," *i. e.*, seems not to be directed. "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." Prov. 16 : 33. To the children of God everything comes from the hand of a faithful Father, who intends it for their good, even when it appears to be evil. Therefore the children of God, however untoward their outward circumstances may be, always respond to the question : "How are you?" with the answer : "I am well."

Question 28.

What advantage is it to us to know that God has created, and by his providence does still uphold all things?

That we may be patient in adversity, thankful in prosperity; and that in all things which may hereafter befall us, we place our firm trust in our faithful God and Father, that nothing shall separate us from his love; since all creatures are so in his hand, that without his will they cannot so much as move.

The advantage accruing from the certain knowledge attained by the study of creation and Providence is, that we are thereby confirmed and strengthened in faith, in assured confidence in God the Father, Al-

mighty Creator. It may be remarked once for all that in the treatment of the catechism it is neither essentially nor catechetically correct to substitute the word "blessing" for "advantage," whenever it occurs. Essentially it is not correct, because "advantage" and "blessing," although related conceptions, yet differ. "Advantage" or gain expresses the wholesome effect of knowledge when appropriated, while "blessing" expresses the gracious activity and guidance of God, in virtue of which we are enabled to find advantage in the different relations in which He places us. Here, as well as in later corresponding answers of the Catechism, it is not said that God does this or that for us, but "that we are to be thus and so," that we are ourselves to draw this or that gain out of particular knowledge. Neither is such a substitution justifiable on catechetical grounds. Even if it were admissible to introduce a related conception for the sake of explanation and a better understanding, here it is not the case, since to the child the expression "advantage," which occurs in its daily life and in outward relations, is more familiar and better understood than that of "blessing." But it is altogether intolerable that the catechist should tell the children: "We use the word blessing for what the catechism here calls advantage."

I. Patient in Adversity.

1. The knowledge that in every adversity God's hand has a directing influence, is to be of this advantage to us, that we are to learn from it to be patient. Heb. 10: 36, James 1: 2, 3.

2. Patience, the proper demeanor in adversity (*i. e.*, in every sorrow and need), in view of the knowledge of the Providence of God, consists:

a) In humble submission to the will of God. Dan. 4: 35, 2 Sam. 15: 25, 26; 16: 10, 1 Tim. 6: 7.

b) The calm resignation to the will of God. Psalm 39: 9; 73: 24, 2 Cor. 12: 8, 9.

3. The earthly life is for every child of God a school of suffering. In it there are three classes. The first say: This I must suffer; "but the right hand of the Most High can change it all." Ps. 77: 10. The second say: I will gladly suffer; for "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." Rom. 8: 18. The third say: I rejoice in suffering; for I have in it a seal of my sonship in Christ. Heb. 12: 5-9, Rom. 5: 3, 2 Cor. 4: 10. Compare Heb. 12: 8.

II. Thankful in Prosperity.

1. The knowledge that we cannot of ourselves secure for ourselves pleasant relations in life, but receive them from God's hand, is to be of this advantage to us that we thank God for them. Gen. 32: 10, 1 Thess. 5: 18.

2. Thankfulness, the proper disposition in prosperity (*i. e.*, in the pleasant circumstances of life) in view of the knowledge of the Providence of God, consists in this, that we do not exalt ourselves, but acknowledge the undeserved favor of God, and it manifests itself in the praise and service of God:

a) With the heart. Ps. 138: 1.

b) With the mouth. Eph. 5: 20.

c) With the hands. Josh. 24: 15, 24. Example: the grateful Samaritan. Luke 17: 11-19.

III. Of Firm Trust for the Future.

1. The knowledge that the eternal and unchangeable God not only cares for us in the present, but by His Providence has already determined and ordered all that is yet to meet us in the future, is to be of this

advantage to us that with believing certainty we expect from Him all future good, and are thereby relieved of care for the future. Hence joyfulness. Ps. 91 : 9-12.

2. To the eye of man the future is enveloped in darkness and uncertainty. On this account we are not to despair or be indifferent, but rather place our entire confidence in the Providence of God. This consists :

a) In confiding trust. Ps. 27 : 1 ; 91 : 1, 2 ; 31 : 15, Jer. 17 : 7.

b) In cheerful hope. Ps. 37 : 5, 7, Isa. 30 : 15. Example : Jacob's ladder. Gen. 28 : 10-15.

3. The certainty of this confidence involves that whatever may befall us in the future, nothing shall separate us from the love of God. Rom. 8 : 35-39, Josh. 1 : 7.

4. The ground of such certainty lies in this, that "all creatures are so in His hand, that without His will they cannot so much as move." Even the worst enemy of the children of God, satan himself, is with reference to them like a dog held by a chain ; he can go no further than the chain reaches ; he may bark and rage, but he cannot hurt. John 10 : 28, Rom. 8 : 31 ; 16 : 20. Examples : Daniel in the lions' den, Dan. 6, and the three men in the fiery furnace, Dan. 3.

6. Faith in the Providence of God is the best "Life Insurance." It has nothing to do with the superstition of a blind destiny which one cannot escape, but on the contrary it is a joyful resignation to a "faithful God and Father." Such, however, the Almighty God is only to His children in Christ Jesus ; to the wicked He is and remains a consuming fire, from which they do not escape. 2 Thess. 1 : 3-10.

OF GOD THE SON.

A. THE PERSON OF CHRIST. (Ques. 29-36.)

Question 29

Why is the Son of God called Jesus, that is, a Savior?

Because he saveth us, and delivereth us from our sins; and likewise, because we ought not to seek, neither can find salvation in any other.

The second part of the Apostle's Creed treats of God the Son and our redemption, or of the person and work of the Redeemer. The following articles refer to the Person of the Redeemer: And in Jesus Christ his only begotten Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary. The following refer to the Work of the Redeemer: Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried, He descended into hell, the third day He rose from the dead, He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. Including the article "Born of the Virgin Mary," the first five (suffered—descended into hell) define the state of humiliation; the other four (rose—to judge the quick and the dead) the state of exaltation.

I. The Name Jesus.

1: "I believe" is to be supplied before "in Jesus Christ." Even as we believe in God the Father, so we are to believe in God the Son, because he is of the same essence and of like glory with the Father, and because it is the Father's will and command. John 14: 1, 11; 10: 30; 6: 39; 5: 23.

2. Jesus (from the Hebrew) was a name that was frequently used (*e. g.*, the two Jesus Sirach), and signifies helper, Savior, literally: "Jehovah is our helper."

But it has its full significance only as the name of the Son of God. Jesus is the Greek form for Joshua. The son of Nun was a type of Jesus. Joshua led God's people out of the desert into Canaan. Jesus leads God's people out of misery into His kingdom and into heaven. He is the "captain (leader) of their salvation." Heb. 2: 10. Later we find the name Jesus (Col. 4: 11) as that of one of the assistants of the Apostle Paul. But the addition "which is called Justus" leads us to suppose that he received the former as a Jew and the latter after his conversion, since no one could any longer be called Jesus, except the Son of God, who alone is the real Jesus.

3. Jesus is the personal name of the Savior, and at the same time points in the direction of His work. It was given Him by God the Father before His birth, through the angel (Matt. 1: 21), and then at His circumcision (Luke 2: 21) by Joseph. As "Jesus of Nazareth" the Savior was spoken of among the people (Matt. 21: 11; 26; 71, Luke 18: 37; 24: 19, John 19: 19). Under this name He was known to angels (Mark 16: 6) and devils (Mark 1: 24). Even after His ascension He thus speaks of Himself. Acts 22: 8.

II. Jesus is the True Savior.

1. "He saveth us and delivereth us from our sins." Matt. 1: 21. Sin deprived our first parents of the happiness of Paradise, and is still the cause of the unhappiness of man. Jesus is the true Savior, because He was created such not by man, but by God. Ps. 130: 8, Luke 19: 10, 1 Tim. 1: 15, 1 John 4: 14.

2. To save (the Greek word signifies "to deliver") means to free the sinner in body and soul from the guilt, punishment and power of sin, and to bring him into communion with God. Gal. 3: 13.

3. Jesus saves us through His obedience by which

He purchased our salvation, and through His Spirit by which He imparts it to us. The beginning is made in this life, and the consummation follows in the life to come. Heb. 5: 9.

4. Those whom He saves are His people. Ursinus (Ques. 20): "The people whom Jesus saves are the chosen or believing ones, all of them and those alone. He is the Savior of these only, because in them alone is His purpose attained. For he has determined to gather in this life a people and to save them, but on the condition that they receive His benefits and are thankful unto Him."

III. Jesus is the Only and Complete Savior.

1. "We ought not to seek, neither can find salvation in any other" (not even the least).

a) Jesus is our only Savior. For according to the testimony of the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures there is only one Mediator, therefore also only one Savior, and that is Jesus. 1 Tim. 2: 5, 6, John 3: 18, Acts 4: 12.

b) Also according to the testimony of the Holy Ghost in the Old Testament, in which salvation and redemption are ascribed to God alone, Jesus only as the Son of God can be the Savior of men. Isa. 43: 11, 25, Hos. 13: 9.

2. Jesus is a complete Savior, so that another need not be sought outside of or beyond Him.

This is true in view of

a) His nature. Heb. 7: 24, 25.

b) The number of the redeemed. 1 John 2: 2, Acts 13: 48.

c) The multitude of sins. 1 John 1: 7.

d) The completeness of the satisfaction. Rom. 1: 8.

e) The time. Heb. 10: 14.

Question 30

Do such then believe in Jesus the only Savior, who seek their salvation and happiness of saints, of themselves, or anywhere else?

They do not; for though they boast of him in words, yet in deeds they deny Jesus, the only deliverer and Savior; for one of these two things must be true, that either Jesus is not a complete Savior, or that they, who by a true faith receive this Savior, must find all things in him necessary to their salvation.

1. The reference here is not to heathen, Jews or Turks, who do not believe in Jesus, neither to such nominal Christians as in general do not wish to know anything of Jesus, but to Christians who recognize Him as a Savior, but not as the only, *i. e.*, exclusive Savior.

2. This is first of all and in general the case in the Roman Catholic Church. They believe in Jesus as the Savior, but they also seek salvation outside of Him.

a) From the saints, especially the virgin Mary, the mother of the Lord, and from the angels, namely through their intercession. All believers who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus are called "saints" in the Scriptures, although they remain, as long as they abide in the flesh, poor sinners who are in need of the grace of God and the daily forgiveness of their sins. "Saints" in the Romish Church are deceased christians whom the Pope has declared to be saints. From the register of these "saints" the names in the almanac have been taken. They are invoked and adored for their intercessions with God, in that prayers are directed to them and their favor is sought by vows which are made to them. It is believed that acceptance with God is obtained more readily through them and their intercessions than by turning to Him direct.

The holy apostles, as well as the angels, refused such adoration, and the virgin Mary did not stand above her Son (John 2: 4, Matt. 12: 46-50), but like every other sinful person was in need of redemption through

Him. When the centurion Cornelius in Cesarea (Acts 10: 25, 26) fell down before Peter and would thus adore him, he said: "Stand up; I myself also am a man." When the men in Lystra would have done sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas, they rent their clothes and cried among the people: "We also are men of like passions with you." Acts 14: 15. And when John (Rev. 22: 8) fell down before the feet of an angel to worship him, he said: "See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God." We read on the contrary in the gospels that when any one fell down at the feet of Jesus to worship Him, even in the days of His humiliation, He did not forbid it, because such adoration was befitting Him as the Son of God. There is only one mediator between God and man (1 Tim. 2: 5), and one intercessor with the Father (1 John 2: 1)—Jesus alone, who is God's only begotten Son and our brother.

That the intercession of believers upon earth is of some help, the Scriptures declare (the Canaanitish woman for her daughter, Matt. 15: 22; the centurion at Capernaum for his servant, Luke 7: 3, 2 Cor. 1: 10, 11, James 5: 15), but to invoke the dead for their intercession with God we have neither command nor example in the Scriptures. We are indeed exhorted by the Apostle (Eph. 6: 18) that we are to make supplication "for all saints," *i. e.*, believing Christians, but it is nowhere said that "deceased" saints pray for us. When in the time of the Reformation an attempt was made in Bohemia to bring back again by persuasion and by force the Protestants into the Romish Church, there came a Protestant tenant to the manor-house of his Catholic proprietor to ask for an abatement of his rent, because his crops had failed. He turned to the manager and chamberlain of the lord, but was turned

away by both of them. When he was about to go away, the nobleman appeared and asked him what he was seeking. The man told him his need and desire, and the kind lord at once exempted him from his rent for the year. At the same time the lord wished to make use of the opportunity to draw the man over to his church. He showed him the pictures of the saints which hung on the wall in the vestibule and declared to him that these were his intercessors with God, and that if the tenant would turn to these, he could be saved. But the man shook his head and said: "I have just had an experience which does not encourage me so to do. When I sought for the intercession of your servants, I was turned away; but when I applied directly to my proprietor, you were kind enough to grant my request immediately. But of the saints I do not even know that they would hear me, should I call upon them."

b) "Of themselves." This refers to their own good works, such as fasting, almsgiving, pilgrimages and every mortification of the body, by which, according to the doctrine of the Romish Church, we merit heaven or a higher place in heaven. On the contrary, God's word declares (Rom. 3: 28), "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." One's "rank in heaven" depends solely upon God's will and pleasure. Matt. 20: 20-23.

c) "Or anywhere else." The means of grace of the Romish Church include also the mass and indulgences. The offering of the mass by the priest is not only to benefit those who participate in its celebration or pay for an offering, but also others for whom masses may be read, even the dead (the so-called masses for departed souls), enabling them the sooner to pass from purgatory into heaven. According to the doctrine of the Romish Church the "saints" are said to have done

more good works than they need for themselves. From this is said to have arisen a treasure of merits of the saints which the pope is to administer, and out of which he may distribute among his own, sufficient merit to cover their deficiencies and for the forgiveness of their sins. This comes to pass in the so-called indulgences, the remission of sins for the sake of the superabundant merits of the "saints." (Originally indulgences were only the remission of Church penalties.) Christ is not represented to us by God as a "sacrifice of the mass," the so-called bloodless sacrifice, but (Rom. 3 : 25) as a propitiation (means of redemption) through faith in His blood; and we (Rom. 3 : 24) receive the forgiveness of sins without any merits of our own or of anyone else, through God's grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

3. But even among the Protestants there are many who stumble at the doctrine that Jesus is the only Savior.

a) He who believes in Jesus and refers this faith only to the free will of man, must also ground his salvation through Christ in its ultimate basis upon himself. Over against this idea the Apostle Paul (1 Cor. 1 : 26-31) represents it as the goal of God's election : that no flesh should glory in his presence, *i. e.*, that no one should attribute anything of his salvation to himself.

b) Whoever believes in Jesus and through God's grace is furnished unto good works (2 Tim. 3 : 17), but makes a merit of the same, does not give Jesus the honor as the only Savior. 2 Cor. 3 : 5, 6.

c) Whoever believes in Jesus, but regards Him only as a wise teacher, through whose moral doctrine one may be refined into a pious person, and thinks that upon the ground of his honorable conduct he may merit heaven, holds in reality himself as his savior and Jesus only as his guide, but not as the only Savior, through

whose merit alone one becomes righteous and is saved. Rom. 3 : 20.

4. All such—in the Romish as well as in the Protestant Church—deny indeed Jesus the only deliverer and Savior, “though they boast of him in words.” For to believe in Jesus means: to trust in him wholly and alone as the Savior. Jer. 2 : 13, 1 Cor. 1 : 13, Gal. 5 : 4.

5. There are only two possibilities: “either Jesus is not a complete Savior,” which the Scriptures deny (Col. 1 : 19, 20), “or that they who by a true faith receive this Savior, must find all things in him necessary to their salvation.” John 10 : 10, Heb. 7 : 25.

Question 31

Why is he called Christ, that is, anointed?

Because he is ordained of God the Father, and anointed with the Holy Ghost to be our chief Prophet and teacher; who has fully revealed to us the secret counsel and will of God concerning our redemption, and to be our only High Priest, who, by the one sacrifice of his body, has redeemed us, and makes continual intercession with the Father for us; and also to be our eternal King, who governs us by his word and Spirit, and who defends and preserves us in the enjoyment of that salvation he has purchased for us.

I. The Name Christ.

1. Christ (from the Greek) and Messiah (from the Hebrew) have the same signification: the anointed one. It is the official name of the Savior, as Jesus is His personal name. Daniel already prophesies (9 : 25, 26) of “Christ (Messiah, the anointed), the Prince.” By this name He is spoken of by the angel at His birth. Luke 2 : 11. As such He is first recognized by His disciples. John 1 : 41. As such Peter confesses Him in faith. Matt. 16 : 16. Whether he is the Messiah, all the people desired to know. John 10 : 24. He acknowledges Himself as such with an oath before the Sanhedrim. Matt. 26 : 63, 64. Jesus said unto him: thou sayest it (*i. e.*, I affirm I am Christ). Also after His resurrec-

tion He testified before His disciples that He is the Messiah, Christ. Luke 24 : 26, Acts 9 : 22.

2. Christ was appointed, *i. e.*, fore-ordained by God the Father from eternity as Redeemer. Prov. 8 : 23. "I (Eternal Wisdom or the eternal word, John 1 : 1, 4, 9) was set up (fore-ordained, appointed) from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was."

3. He was anointed by God the Father, *i. e.*, endowed with the Holy Ghost. As the Son of God He is from eternity one with the Holy Ghost ; as man He was visibly anointed with the Holy Ghost by God the Father, when He entered upon His ministry, through the baptism of John in the Jordan. John testified and said : I saw the Spirit descending . . . and it abode upon Him. John 1 : 32, 34. Christ Himself attested it. Luke 4 : 18. The apostles bore witness to it. Acts 4 : 27 ; 10 : 38, Heb. 1 : 9.

4. In the old covenant the following were called anointed of God, because they were anointed with oil for their office :

a) The prophets, *e. g.*, Elisha (1 Kings 19 : 16). Ps. 105 : 15 : Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm. ("Anointed" signifies the same here as "prophet.")

b) The high priests. Ex. 30 : 30, Lev. 8 : 12.

c) The kings, *e. g.*, Saul (1 Sam. 10 : 1), David (1 Sam. 16 : 2, 3, 13), Solomon (1 Kings 1 : 39).

5. This anointing was with oil, which was poured upon the head. The oil which was rubbed into the body in the orient in order to make the limbs supple and strong for work as well as for battle, was used as an emblem in the anointing of the prophets, high priests and kings. Such an external anointing with oil was to be to them an assurance that they were regularly called to their office by God, and that God favored them with the needful gifts of His Spirit, of which the oil was an

emblem, and prepared them for the administration of their office. Christ was not anointed with the oil, the emblem, but with the Holy Ghost Himself in a visible manner at His baptism, and not through men, but directly by God the Father. Matt. 3: 17.

II. The Threefold Office of Christ.

The threefold office to which Christ was appointed and anointed by God the Father, consists in the office of: 1. Prophet or Teacher, 2. High Priest or Mediator, and 3. King or Ruler. The Savior not only filled these offices in His work upon earth, but His activity in these three directions still continues.

A. The Office of Prophet or Teacher.

1. The prophets of the old covenant were men who were immediately called by God and were guided by the Holy Ghost, to preach repentance to the people of God, to reform them in worship and conduct, to reveal hidden and future events, and especially to prophesy of the future Redeemer. In attestation of their mission God had given them the power to perform signs and wonders. Jer. 1: 7, 2 Peter 1: 21. Signs and wonders as attestations of His divine mission for the benefit of Moses himself (Ex. 3: 12), and for the benefit of the people (Ex. 3: 4, 5, 8).

2. Christ is the prophet who was foretold by Moses (Deut. 18: 15). As such He is designated by God the Father, Matt. 17: 5; recognized by the people, John 6: 14; and confessed by the apostles, Acts 3: 22.

3. Christ is our chief prophet and teacher because He has fully revealed to us the secret (hidden) counsel and will of God (which no one could know of himself) concerning our redemption (that we can be saved only through Jesus Christ)—Col. 1: 26: “The mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations,

but now is made manifest to his saints." On this account He stands above all prophets.

a) The prophets revealed the secret counsel of God only in parts, as much as was given to them by God. Dan. 12: 9, Matt. 13: 17. But Christ hath declared all things. John 1: 18; 15: 15.

b) All the prophets prophesied of Christ. Acts 10: 43.

c) All the prophets prophesied through Christ. 1 Peter 1: 11.

4. Christ performed His prophetic or teaching office:

a) Through His teaching; He taught the law (sermon on the mount, Matt. 5-7), preached repentance, and proclaimed the kingdom of God (Mark 1: 15). Of the kingdom of God He spoke mostly in parables, the material of which He selected from creation or the experiences of men to declare the nature and the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, *e. g.*, Matt. 13: 35, Luke 15. While through these the kingdom of God was to be revealed to His disciples, it was to be hidden from unbelievers. Matt. 13: 11.

b) Through the cleansing of the temple, at the beginning of His prophetic office, John 2: 13-17, and at the end of it, Matt. 21: 11-13.

c) Through His prophecies concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, the end of the world, and the future of the kingdom of God. Matt. 24.

d) Through His life. John 4: 34; 8: 12, 46, 1 Peter 2: 21.

e) Through His miracles, which served at the same time as an attestation of His divine mission. Matt. 11: 2-6, John 14: 11; 10: 25, 38; 3: 2, Luke 24: 19. The miracles of Christ included: 1. The healing of all manner of sickness (all kinds of diseases and sickness among the people, Matt. 4: 23; and those who were under the power of the devil, the possessed, Acts 10:

38) either by touch, *e. g.*, the lepers, Matt. 8 : 3 ; or by a mere word, *e. g.*, blind Bartimaeus, Mark 10 : 52 ; or at a distance, *e. g.*, the daughter of the Canaanitish woman, Matt. 15 : 28. 2. Raising of the dead, of which three instances are reported in the gospels : Jairus's daughter who had just died, Matt. 9 : 18 ; the widow's son at Nain, whom they were already bearing to the grave, Luke 7 : 12 ; Lazarus at Bethany, who had already lain four days in the grave, John 11 : 39. 3. Miracles of power. John 2 : 11 : He manifested forth His glory, *i. e.*, His power over the creation, *e. g.*, the changing of water into wine at Cana (John 2 : 1-10), the feeding of the thousands in the desert with a few loaves (Matt. 14 : 14-21 ; Mark 8 : 1-9), walking upon the sea (Matt. 14 : 25), the stilling of the tempest (Mark 4 : 39), the withering of the fig tree (Matt. 21 : 19). On the contrary Christ never performed a miracle for mere show, and when solicited so to do by Satan (Matt. 4 : 5-7) and the Pharisees (Mark 8 : 11, 12), positively refused to gratify them.

f) To the end of the world, through the teaching office instituted by Him. Matt. 28 : 19, Luke 10 : 16, 2 Cor. 5 : 20, Eph. 4 : 11.

B. The Office of High Priest or Mediator.

1. The function of priest under the old covenant was to offer sacrifices and to represent the people before God. The high priest's duty was to make an offering for the sins of all the people once a year on the great day of atonement, after he had made a sacrifice for his own sins, and with the blood of the victim to go into the holy of holies, which he alone was allowed to enter, in order to sprinkle with the blood the mercy seat (the lid of the ark of the covenant). Lev. 16. Further, the high priest carried upon his breast the Urim and Thummim ("light and truth") as a breastplate or "badge of office,"

made of gold and decorated with precious stones (Ex. 28 : 15–30), on which were inscribed the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, that he might “bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart continually” and remember them with intercession before the Lord. Lastly, it was the duty of the high priest to bless the people with uplifted hands. Lev. 9 : 22. (Aaron’s blessing, Num. 6 : 22–27.)

2. Christ is the High Priest of the new covenant, of which the high priest of the old covenant was a type. Heb. 3 : 1 ; 4 : 14. He fulfills His high priestly office :

a) In that He redeemed us with the one sacrifice of His body. Heb. 10 : 10, Eph. 5 : 2, 1 Peter 2 : 24.

b) In that He represents us at all times with His intercession before the Father. The high priestly prayer, John 17, Luke 23 : 34, 1 John 2 : 1, Rom. 8 : 34, Heb. 7 : 25.

c) In that He blesses His own. And His blessing is not a mere wish, but a real imparting of good. Mark 10 : 16, Luke 24 : 50, Eph. 1 : 3.

3. Christ as the High Priest of the new covenant is greater than the one of the old covenant. Let us compare the two :

a) The high priest of the old covenant was a sinful man who had to make a sacrifice first for his own sins—Christ the holy one of God was without sin. Heb. 7 : 27.

b) The former offered an animal—Christ offered Himself. Heb. 13 : 12.

c) The former entered the earthly holy of holies—Christ the heavenly. Heb. 9 : 12.

d) The former had to repeat the sacrifice every year—Christ “was once offered to bear the sins of many.” Heb. 9 : 28.

e) The former offered sacrifices only for the sins of Israel—Christ is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world (of all men, in all the world and in all

times) who shall be saved through Him. 1 John 2: 2.

f) The former was mortal and had successors in office—Christ ever liveth and hath established an eternal redemption; therefore He is our only High Priest. Heb. 7: 21, 23, 24: “Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.” (Ps. 110: 4). “They truly were many priests because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: but this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.” (Heb. 7: 24).

C. The Office of King or Ruler.

1. A king is a ruler by the grace of God, who is set over a kingdom in which he governs his subjects by law, and which he defends against enemies by arms.

2. Christ is our eternal King.

a) He is appointed by God. Ps. 2: 6.

b) He has a kingdom, the “Kingdom of God,” or the “Kingdom of heaven.” John 18: 36, 37.

c) He ascended His kingly throne at His ascension and proclaimed His government. Matt. 28: 18, Eph. 1: 20–22.

d) His subjects are His believing children. Ps. 110: 3, Eph. 1: 22.

e) The limits of His kingdom are the ends of the earth. Acts 1: 8, Ps. 93: 1.

f) He is at all times the “Augmenter (Mehrer des Reichs) of the Kingdom,” which He wins not by force of arms, but by the word of His mouth. Isa. 60: 5, Acts 2: 47, Rev. 7: 9, Matt. 28: 19, Isa. 53: 12.

g) The duration of His reign is eternal. Ps. 93: 2, Luke 1: 33, Rev. 11: 15; 17: 14.

3. Christ administers His kingly office in three directions:

a) He governs us 1) By His word (law and gospel), in which He reveals His will. (The sermon on the mount is the law of the kingdom), Ps. 110: 2, John

14 : 23, Heb. 4 : 12. 2) By His spirit, through which He gives to us the strength to fulfill His will. Ps. 143 : 10, John 16 : 13.

b) He protects us in the purchased redemption against enemies who would rob us of the same, *i. e.*, the devil, the world and our own flesh. Ps. 110 : 2, Rom. 16 : 20, Matt. 16 : 18, John 10 : 28.

c) He upholds us, for he constantly renews our strength and secures us against apostasy. Ps. 71 : 16, Isa. 40 : 31, Rom. 8 : 37, 1 Cor. 1 : 8.

III. The Advantage of the Threefold Office of Christ.

1. What Christ has done for us in the exercise of His threefold office may be summarized as follows: As prophet he revealed in His teaching office the way of salvation; as High Priest by His obedience in His mediatorial work He secured our salvation; as King since His exaltation in His kingdom He communicates salvation.

2. To this corresponds what Christ accomplishes in us by the exercise of His threefold office. Through His activity in His prophetic office our understanding is enlightened; by means of His high priesthood our conscience is set at rest; by His kingly reign our will is sanctified.

Question 32

But why art thou called a Christian?

Because I am a member of Christ by faith, and thus am partaker of His anointing, that so I may confess His name, and present myself a living sacrifice of thankfulness to Him, and also, that with a free and good conscience I may fight against sin and satan in this life, and afterwards reign with Him eternally, over all creatures.

I. Of the Name and State of Christians.

1. Christ called His own, “disciples,” “friends” and “brethren.” John 13 : 35; 15 : 14; 20 : 17.

2. The first Christians called themselves “disciples,”

i. e., learners, viz., Christ's learners, or "brothers" (and "sisters"), or "saints," *i. e.*, sanctified, separated from the world and appointed to salvation. Acts 6: 7; 9: 30, Jas. 2: 15, Eph. 6: 18.

3. At Antioch in Asia Minor the name Christians, *i. e.*, adherents of Christ, was first used as a term of reproach, as the Reformed are sometimes called Zwinglians or Calvinists. The Christians themselves, in view of their glorified head, Christ Jesus, the Lord of lords, and King of kings, were pleased to accept this name as a name of honor. Acts 11: 26. The name "Christian" occurs in the apostolic letters only in 1 Peter 4: 16.

4. "Christian," the same as the word Christ, means an anointed one, filled, as it were, by the Holy Ghost, who is also the spirit of Christ. Gal. 4: 6, 2 Cor. 1: 21, 22, 1 John 2: 20.

5. Baptism alone does not yet constitute living attachment to Christ, but one becomes a partaker of His anointing when one is "a member of Christ by faith." Holy baptism is a seal of the covenant for those only who are engrafted into Christ by faith, and belong to the covenant of grace. Mark 16: 16: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (although he is baptized). As the living branches (John 15) upon the vine have the same sap coursing through them, and all the living members of a body the same blood, so all living Christians are filled by one Spirit, *i. e.*, the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Christ. Eph. 3: 17, 1 Cor. 12: 27, Eph. 5: 30.

6. Our anointing is the same as that of Christ, *i. e.*, by one and the same Holy Ghost. 1 Cor. 6: 17. We differ from Christ in the measure of the anointing by the Holy Ghost, in that He received the Spirit without measure (John 3: 34), but we receive the same from Him (John 15: 26), and each one in such measure as it pleases the Lord. (1 Cor. 12: 11, Eph. 4: 7).

7. Apparent Christians and true Christians are to be distinguished :

a) Those who are only apparently Christians are such as have (2 Tim. 3 : 5) the form of a godly life, but deny the power thereof.

b) True Christians must be in Christ, and must be conformed to His image in word and deed. 2 Tim. 2 : 19.

II. Of the Threefold Office of Christians.

Through the anointing of Christ which we receive, we are not merely united with His person, but are also called to a corresponding threefold office, for the fulfilling of which the Holy Ghost furnishes us by His gifts. This kingly, priestly and prophetic calling is expressed in 1 Peter 2 : 9 : "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people ; that ye (as prophets) should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

A. The Office of Teacher.

"That so I may confess His name."

1. To confess the name of Christ means (in the narrower sense) to acknowledge before every one that I believe in Jesus Christ as my only Savior, and that I am His own in body and soul, both in life and in death. But this confession presupposes a correct knowledge, and authenticates itself in a holy walk and an effort to spread and defend divine truth. In the wider sense confession of the name of Christ includes also walking in the spirit of Christ. Matt. 10 : 32, Rom. 10 : 10, 1 Peter 2 : 12, 2 Tim. 2 : 2.

2. The opposite of confession is denial, through the fear and favor of man, *i. e.*, to deny that one knows Jesus Christ, and believes in Him, for the purpose of escaping an external disadvantage, or of securing an external advantage. The name of Christ is also denied

when one confesses Him in words, but dishonors Him by an unholy life. Matt. 10 : 33. Peter in the palace of the High Priest is an example. Matt. 26 : 69-75. Hearty repentance before God and man is the only way for one who has denied Christ to recover again from his fall.

B. The Office of Priest.

“And present myself a living sacrifice of thankfulness.”

1. Christ as High Priest gave His life unto death as an atoning sacrifice for me ; in return for this I am to mortify my flesh and dedicate my whole life as a thank-offering to His honor. 1 Peter 2 : 5. Rom. 12 : 1 : “I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God (for the sake of the mercy of God experienced in the sacrifice of Christ), that ye present (offer up) your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

2. Of the nature of such a thank-offering are :

a) The entire surrender of the heart with all its desires and inclinations. Gen. 22 : 2. Under a picture of Calvin in which he holds a heart in his hand, are written these words of his : “I offer my bleeding heart as an offering to God.”

b) Prayer. Ps. 119 : 108, Heb. 13 : 15.

c) Gifts of love and charity. In Phil. 4 : 18, the apostle Paul calls those gifts of love that were sent to him from Philippi “a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God.” Heb. 13 : 16.

3. Ursinus. “Our priesthood consists in this, that we offer unto God acceptable sacrifices of thanksgiving, sanctified by the offering of Christ,” which includes, *a)* Ourselves, in that we mortify our old man and offer our members unto God as instruments of righteousness ; *b)* Our prayers ; *c)* Our alms ; *d)* The confession of the Gospel (Rom. 15 : 16 : “ministering the

gospel of God, *i. e.*, proclaiming it to the Gentiles); *e*) Bearing our cross and the sufferings which God sends upon us (Phil. 2 : 17 : “ Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all”; 2 Tim. 4 : 6 : “ For I am now ready to be offered and the time of my departure is at hand”).

4. The doctrine of the general priesthood of true Christians is based specially upon the passage in 1 Peter 2 : 9, 10 : “ Ye are a royal priesthood . . . which are now the people of God.” By this we are to understand that we need no human priest as mediator between us and God, as in the old covenant, but have free access to God in Christ. This teaching is contrary, on the one hand, to the arrangement of a priesthood (hierarchy) in the papacy, after the pattern of the Old Testament and Levitical priesthood; and, on the other hand, it does not justify the practice of modern Protestantism, which allows all members of the church without distinction, even the unbelieving and unchurchly, the same right of co-operation in the appointment of church officers and the direction of church affairs.

C. The Office of King.

“ That with a free and good conscience I may fight against sin and satan in this life, and afterwards reign with Him eternally over all creatures.”

1. The exercise of our kingly office is distinguished as to time and manner: *a*) in this life—fight, and *b*) afterwards eternally—reign.

2. A king is one who conducts righteous wars against his enemies. In accordance with our kingly Christian calling, we fight against our bitterest enemies :

a) Sin, which would again bring us into bondage. Rom. 6 : 12, 13, 1 Tim. 1 : 18, 1 Cor. 9 : 27.

b) The world, which on account of our confession of Christ, bears ill-will toward us, or would draw us over to itself. 2 Tim. 2 : 3, 2 Cor. 6 : 7, Rom. 12 : 2.

c) The devil, who presses us hard with temptations of all kinds to cause us to fall; at one time he allures and entices, in connection with which he puts on the appearance of an angel of light (2 Cor. 11: 14), at another he threatens and terrifies. Eph. 6: 11, 12, James 4: 7, 1 Peter, 5: 8, 9.

3. A warrior who would fight with fettered hands and feet could not accomplish anything; therefore we must also fight "with a free and good conscience," if we would conquer, free from the fetters of sin and guilt, *i. e.*, we must have forgiveness of sin, that we may have strength and courage for the conflict.

4. The conflict must be carried forward with the right weapons and in the right manner.

a) The armor of a soldier of Jesus Christ is described in Eph. 6: 10-18. The weapons of protection or defense are truth, righteousness, peace, faith and assurance of salvation. The weapon of offense or attack is the word of God. Believing prayer serves for protection and attack.

b) We are appointed to a spiritual conflict, and it must therefore be carried forward in a spiritual manner. 2 Cor. 10: 3, 4, 2 Tim. 2: 5, 1 Cor. 9: 26.

5. The numerous victories which by the grace of God are granted to true Christians in these conflicts, notwithstanding their own helplessness, are followed by final triumph: "Reign with him eternally over all creatures." Only he who has fought here in Christ, will reign with Him there, *i. e.*, become a partaker of His glory. 2 Tim. 2: 12, Rev. 3: 21: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne" To this dominion belongs also the participation on the part of true Christians in the final judgment of the world of ungodly men and of fallen angels. 1 Cor. 6: 2, 3.

6. The reign with Christ will be a much higher and

more comprehensive one than the dominion over the earth which God granted originally to Adam. Gen. 1 : 28.

Question 33.

Why is Christ called the only begotten Son of God, since we are also the children of God?

Because Christ alone is the eternal and natural Son of God; but we are children adopted of God, by grace, for his sake.

If Christ in His essence is equal with God, He is true God. Therefore Question 33 treats of the true Divinity of Jesus Christ.

I. Why Christ is Called the Son of God.

1. By the expression "Son of God" is indicated the relation of our Savior Jesus Christ to God. When we speak of divine things in human language, we can do so only by approximate comparisons with human relations, because human speech lacks the corresponding terms requisite to the full expression of the divine. Human offspring is of the same nature as the parent from which it is descended, so the expression "Son of God" is intended to convey the idea that Jesus Christ is of the essence of God and, therefore, God. From the divine relation, however, is excluded every distinction of time and of rank such as pertains to the relation of an earthly son to his father. It is for us in reality a divine mystery, even in revelation, which we can neither fathom in our thinking nor express in words. Ps. 139 : 6.

2. In the Scriptures Christ is spoken of as the Son of God.

a) God Himself calls Him His Son. Mark 1 : 11 ; 9 : 7.

b) The devil knows and acknowledges Him as God's Son. Matt. 4 : 3, 6.

c) His disciples acknowledge and confess Him as God's Son. John 1 : 49, Matt. 16 : 16, John 11 : 27.

d) Christ Himself speaks of Himself as the Son of God. John 3 : 16 ; 10 : 36, Mark 14 : 62.

The Jews well understood what was signified by Jesus calling God His Father, and Himself God's Son. John 5 : 18. (Compare John 10 : 33.) So also the High Priest, Caiaphas, when solemnly assured of Jesus that He was the Son of God. Mark 14 : 63, 64.

3. Christ is the only begotten Son of God, *i. e.*, He is begotten of God, not created, and is the only one of His Being, beside Him no other ; therefore, in this unique sense Christ alone is called the Son of God. "Son of God" is for Him, not, as it were, a mere title of eminent distinction as a man, but as the only begotten Son of God, expresses most strictly His essential divine relation. This is set forth already in the prophecies, Ps. 2 : 7—"The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son ; this day have I begotten thee." John 1 : 14, 1 John 4 : 9, Col. 1 : 15 : "Firstborn of every creature." (Here the word "born" stands in sharp contrast with "creatures," *i. e.*, everything created, and "before creation" means from before the beginning of time, *i. e.*, from eternity.)

4. Christ is the eternal Son of God.

a) He is from eternity. John 1 : 1, 2. The Son of God is called the Word, because the Father reveals Himself Through Him. (Compare verse 18.) "In the beginning," *i. e.*, when the world began and before any created thing was in existence. Then already the Son of God existed. He did not come into being with the beginning of all things, and He was God, *i. e.*, of the divine essence from eternity. 1 John 1 : 1, 2, John 14 : 6, Col. 1 : 17.

b) He is also the Son of God to eternity. Heb. 13 : 8, Rev. 22 : 13.

5. Christ is the “natural” Son of God, *i. e.*, like unto God the Father in essence (nature) and in glory. The word “natural” is of the same significance as “his own” in Rom. 8 : 32 : “He that spared not His own Son.” John 5 : 26 ; 10 : 30 ; 14 : 9, 11, Col. 2 : 9.

6. The divinity of Christ is clearly proved by the fact that in the Scriptures there are attributed to the Redeemer :

a) Divine names. Isa. 9 : 6, John 20 : 28, Acts 20 : 28, Rev. 5 : 9, Rom. 9 : 5, 1 John 5 : 20, Rev. 1 : 8.

Jesus Christ is spoken of by the Apostles with evident preference as “the Lord.” With the same word they express God’s name Jehovah in the passages which they translated from Hebrew into Greek, as had already been done by the Septuagint (the seventy “interpreters,” who by arrangement of King Ptolemy Philadelphus translated the Old Testament from Hebrew into Greek at Alexandria in the third century B. C.).

The apostles also refer without further explanation the word “Jehovah” to Christ.

b) Divine perfections or attributes :

1. Omniscience. John 1 : 48 ; 2 : 25 ; 21 : 17. 2. Omnipresence. Matt. 28 : 20 ; 18 : 20. 3. Omnipotence. Matt. 11 : 27, John 5 : 17, Matt. 28 : 18, Col. 1 : 16, 17. 4. Eternity. Micha 5 : 2, John 8 : 58 : 17 : 5. 5. Unchangeableness. Heb. 13 : 8.

c) Divine works. 1. The creation and preservation of the world. John 1 : 3, Heb. 1 : 3. 2. Election. John 15 : 16, Acts 9 : 15. 3. The creation of the new life in man. John 6 : 47. 4. The power to forgive sins. Mark 2 : 7, 10. 5. The raising of the dead. John 5 : 21, 28, 29. 6. The holding of the final judgment. John 5 : 22, Acts 10 : 42.

d) Divine honors. John 5 : 23, Heb. 1 : 3. The honor which belongs exclusively to God is that of worship. This also belongs to Christ, the Son of God.

Luke 24: 52, Acts 7: 59, Rev. 5: 8, 9, Heb. 1: 6. 7. When Christ represents Himself as subordinate to the Father, John 14: 28, Mark 13: 32, it is to be understood in the sense that the Son of God at His incarnation laid aside His divine glory, and for the purpose of accomplishing the work of redemption voluntarily humbled Himself, *i. e.*, subordinated Himself and became subject to the Father. The dependence and subordination can only be regarded as apparent when Christ says, John 5: 19, 20, "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do . . . and sheweth him all things that himself doeth." This has reference more particularly to unity of being and harmony of will, as may be inferred from the intervening words, "for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." So also verse 21 sets forth the independence of the accordant wills: "For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will."

II. Why we are Called Children of God.

1. All who have been baptized and heartily believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as their only Savior, are called children of God. John 1: 12, Eph. 1: 5, Gal. 3: 26, 27, Rom. 8: 16.

2. The Savior called those that believe in Him His brothers and sisters, therefore children of God. Mark 3: 35, John 20: 17.

3. But there is a difference between Christ, the Son of God, and believers who are also the children of God, which consists in this, that He is the eternal and natural Son of God, *i. e.*, like Him in essence, while we are: *a*) By nature children of wrath, *i. e.*, on account of sin we have exposed ourselves to judgment and to eternal death, Eph. 2: 3, and we become the children of God only by regeneration (Rom. 8: 14). It is *b*) through

grace, Eph. 1 : 4, and *c*) for Christ's sake that we are accepted as the children of God. We are adopted children, next to the son of the house. Eph. 1 : 6, 2 Cor. 6 : 17, 18, Heb. 2 : 11.

4. Childhood is regarded in the world as the happiest time and the pleasantest relation in life. We sing and say : O happy days of childhood ! The happiest condition upon earth is to be a child of God, through faith in Christ, the Son of God. For this endures throughout eternity. This sonship includes :

a) The disposition of childhood. Matt. 5 : 9.

b) The privilege of childhood to come before the father with all our cares. Rom. 8 : 15.

c) The discipline of childhood. Heb. 12 : 6, 7.

d) The affection of childhood. 1 John 4 : 19.

e) The inheritance of childhood, eternal salvation and glory. Rom. 8 : 17.

Question 34.

Wherefore callest thou him Our Lord ?

Because he hath redeemed us, both soul and body, from all our sins, not with gold or silver, but with his precious blood, and hath delivered us from all the power of the devil, and thus hath made us his own property.

I. From What Christ hath Redeemed us.

To redeem signifies to liberate, to free, more particularly to ransom. The statements of the Catechism that He "hath redeemed us . . . and delivered us . . . and thus made us his own property," are not tautological, but are to be understood as signifying that Christ hath purchased our freedom from sin, not in the sense that we belong to ourselves or to some one else, but rather that in so doing He made us His own property.

1. According to the law of Moses, an impoverished Israelite could sell himself as a servant or slave to a

foreign resident of Canaan. The freedom of such a one could be purchased before the year of jubilee (the 50th year), in which all slaves became free without recompense, and it was the duty of his brother or of his next of kin to secure his freedom when he himself had not earned enough to do it. Lev. 25 : 47-54. By nature we are all impoverished and in debt through sin. Rom. 3 : 23. Therefore we are sold under sin and have come under the power of the one who is the cause of sin, the devil, the alien. Rom. 7 : 14 ; 6 : 17. In this servitude we can not earn for ourselves anything before God, with which to purchase our redemption. Rom. 3 : 12. Neither can a brother in the flesh, nor a mere man redeem us. Ps. 49 : 7, 8. But that we may not forever remain in servitude, the Son of God became man, *i. e.*, became our brother, in order to redeem us. 1 Tim. 2 : 5, 6.

3. Christ hath redeemed us from sin.

a) From the guilt of sin. Col. 2 : 14.

b) From the dominion of sin. Rom. 6 : 14.

c) From the punishment of sin, which is death. 1. From the fear of death. Heb. 2 : 15. 2. From spiritual death. 1 John 3 : 14. 3. From eternal death. John 8 : 51, Rom. 5 : 9.

4. Christ hath redeemed us and delivered us from the power of the devil. Through sin we have not become the property of the devil, we have only come under his power. God remains the real Lord over all men. Therefore Christ paid the ransom, not to the devil, but to God (Eph. 5 : 2), to satisfy His righteousness, *i. e.*, His rightful claims. At the same time He was surrendered to the power, but not to the ownership of the devil, and therefore could not be holden by the same. Luke 22 : 53, John 14 : 30, Heb. 2 : 14.

II. The Means by Which Christ hath Redeemed us.

1. In the redemption of slaves the ransom consisted of silver or gold, and only outward servitude and temporal freedom were involved therein. But deliverance from sin implies that both body and soul are set free and redeemed for eternity, which can not be done with perishable silver or gold. The value of a single human soul is so great that all the silver and gold of the whole world can not redeem it. Matt. 16 : 26.

2. According to the decree of the love and mercy of God, only the blood of His Son, *i. e.*, the complete surrender of His life, even to a violent and bloody death, was to constitute and could be accepted as the ransom. The blood of Christ is called "precious," because it has sufficient worth to redeem all the chosen ones at all times and in all the world, and to bring them into the freedom of the children of God. Matt. 20 : 28 ; 26 : 28, Eph. 1 : 7, 1 Peter 1 : 18, 19, Rev. 5 : 9.

III. The Purpose of our Redemption.

1. All those whom Christ hath redeemed and purchased with His precious blood, have thereby become His property, and He is their Lord. Tit. 2 : 14, Acts 2 : 36.

2. True believers are therefore Christ's property, and only when we have been born again by the Holy Ghost can we call Him "our Lord." Eph. 1 : 13, 14, 1 Cor. 12 : 3.

3. This ownership of Christ in us we are to manifest :

a) By honoring Him in body and soul. 1 Cor. 6 : 20.

b) By joyfully obeying Him. Luke 1 : 74, 75, Matt. 7 : 21.

c) By humbly submitting to His will. 1 Peter 5 : 6, 2 Samuel 15 : 26.

d) By serving Him only. 1 Cor. 7 : 23, 2 Peter 2 : 1, Jude, verse 4.

4. The heathen are also the inheritance of Christ. Ps. 82 : 8, John 11 : 51, 52, Rev. 7 : 9, 10.

5. Christ is Lord over all, even over the unbelieving and over His enemies, although they do not acknowledge Him as Lord and are not willing to subject themselves to Him. Luke 19 : 14, 1 Cor. 15 : 25, Phil. 2 : 10.

THE TWOFOLD STATE OF CHRIST. (Ques. 35-52.)

1. Upon the basis of the Scriptural truth expressed in Phil. 2 : 6-11, we speak of a twofold state of Christ, His state of humiliation and His state of exaltation. It was necessary that Christ should humble Himself to secure our salvation, and that He should be exalted to impart to us His purchased redemption. Luke 24 : 26, Rom. 4 : 25, Heb. 2 : 7-10.

2. The state of Christ's humiliation is characterized by five stages : 1. His incarnation, 2. His suffering, 3. His death, 4. His burial, 5. His descent into hell. The state of Christ's exaltation embraces four stages : 1. His resurrection, 2. His ascension into heaven, 3. His sitting at the right hand of God, 4. His coming again to judgment.

3. This twofold state of Christ was already prophesied in the Old Testament. Isa. 53.

a) He grew up as a tender plant out of a dry ground—He hath no form nor comeliness—He was despised and rejected of men ; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief—He was oppressed, afflicted, wounded, bruised, smitten of God. *b)* But then He shall prolong His days—the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hands—He shall justify many—He shall divide the spoil with the strong.

4. In the New Testament the twofold state of Christ is set forth by the Apostle Paul in Phil. 2 : 6-11. *a)* Who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize

to be on an equality with God (John 17: 5)—taking the form of a servant—being made in the likeness of men—humbled Himself—becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross. *b*) Wherefore also God highly exalted Him—gave unto Him the name which is above every name—that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow—and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Question 35

What is the meaning of these words, “he was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary?”

That God’s eternal Son, who is, and continueth true and eternal God, took upon him the very nature of man, of the flesh and blood of the Virgin Mary, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, that he might also be the true seed of David, like unto his brethren in all things, sin excepted.

I. How the Son of God Became Man.

1. The eternal Son of God (refer to Question 33) is and also remains in and after His incarnation true and eternal God; for eternity belongs to His divine nature and cannot be laid aside. Gal. 4: 4, John 1: 14, Rom. 9: 5, 1 John 5: 20, 1 Tim. 3: 16, Col. 2: 9, Heb. 1: 10–12.

2. When a prince voluntarily forsakes his father’s abode and travels to a distant country, and there assumes the garb of a servant and performs menial service, he nevertheless remains what he is, the son of the king, and retains his right to the throne. So Christ left heaven and laid aside the glory of His Father (His divine state), and took the form of a servant in His incarnation, without ceasing to be the Son of God and without surrendering His divine nature. He counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, *i. e.*, it was not something that He would grasp after or selfishly hold on to, for it was His by right. Upon His

return to heaven, at His ascension, the King's Son ascended the royal throne "at the right hand of the Majesty on high," as the Son of God, but at the same time also as the Son of man, as there was nothing of which to be ashamed in His lowly condition and in His service upon earth.

3. The eternal Son of God became man.

a) When the time was fulfilled, Gal. 4: 4, *i. e.*, when the time had come which had been indicated in general outlines by the prophecies in the Old Testament.

1, Gen. 49: 10. The sceptre (leadership) shall not depart from Judah until Shiloh come (literally, he to whom it belongs, *i. e.*, until the one who, being descended from the tribe of Judah, will become the real and permanent leader). That this prophecy has been fulfilled in Christ, is indicated in Rev. 5: 5, where He is called the "lion (compare Gen. 49: 9) of the tribe of Judah." When Christ was born, the time had come when the leadership in Israel had entirely departed from Judah. The Romans had become the sovereigns of the land. The Jewish King Herod was an Idumean, a descendant of Edom, *i. e.*, of Esau, and the politico-social community of Israel had forever come to an end.

2, Daniel 9: 24, 25. The seventy weeks of which the angel Gabriel spake to Daniel, are not to be understood as weeks of seven days, but as prophetic weeks, *i. e.*, as periods of seven years each, and the entire period embraced $70 \times 7 = 490$ years. Accepting now the command that went forth as the Edict of King Artaxerxes (Artaxerxes Longimanus), in consequence of which the ruined city of Jerusalem was rebuilt "in troublous times," the departure of Ezra with the Jews falls in the year 457 B. C., Ez. 7: 8, 9, and the end of the seventy prophetic weeks in the year 33 A. D., the year in which by the death of Christ there is made "an end of sins and reconciliation for iniquity, and everlasting-

ing righteousness" is brought in. The same angel Gabriel, who announced to Daniel the time of the coming redemption, also announced to Mary when the time was to be fulfilled for the birth of the Redeemer. Luke 1 : 26. Christ Himself (Matt. 24 : 15) refers to this prophecy of Daniel (9 : 26, 27), and points to its complete fulfillment in the future.

3, Haggai 2 : 7, 8. The movement of the nations, spoken of by the prophet, we see fulfilled in the Roman Empire, which at the time of the birth of Christ embraced all the nations of the then known "world," which, by colonization, became completely intermingled. An agitation from within passed through the Empire, because the people were tired of their old pagan faith, so that even the priests themselves ridiculed it, and longed for new ideals. An outer movement was at least partially brought about through the command of Caesar Augustus, that "all the world should be enrolled."

4, Mal. 3 : 1 ; 4 : 5 : Behold, I will send my messenger and the Lord shall suddenly come to his temple. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come (the "day" signifies that the coming of Christ as Redeemer and His return as Judge are viewed in the prophetic perspective as occurring at the same time). Christ Himself says of John the Baptist : This is Elijah, which is to come. Matt. 11 : 14, Matt. 17 : 12 : I say unto you, that Elijah is come already. Then the disciples understood that He had spoken to them of John the Baptist.

5, Christ Himself said, in view of the prophecies of the Old Testament and of the "signs of the times," at His public appearance : The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand. Mark 1 : 15, Matt. 16 : 3 : Ye cannot discern the signs of the times.

b) The eternal Son of God became man, in that He

took upon Himself the very nature of man, of the flesh and blood of the Virgin Mary. His birth from a virgin was prophesied. Isa. 7 : 14. This prophecy was fulfilled according to the word of the angel Gabriel. Luke 1 : 31. The virgin's name was Mary. Luke 1 : 27. She brought forth her first-born son. Luke 2 : 7. Because Christ was born of a woman, the prophecy given in Paradise (Gen. 3 : 15) was fulfilled. Gal 4 : 4: Born of a woman.

e) Conceived by the Holy Ghost.

1, Mary herself was not sinless, but she was sanctified in faith. Luke 1 : 45. Because the Redeemer Himself must be sinless, He must also be born without sin. Therefore He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, *i. e.*, He became man through the operation of the Holy Ghost. In this connection both expressions of the Apostle Paul are very important. Acts 13 : 23 : Of this man's seed hath God according to promise brought unto Israel a Savior, Jesus. Rom. 1 : 3 : Who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh. The incarnation of the Son of God was at the same time a work of the creative power of the Triune God, and therefore He also became the second Adam. Luke 1 : 35 : The Holy Ghost shall come upon Thee wherefore also that which is to be born shall be called holy, the Son of God. At the time of the salutation of the angel, Mary was betrothed to Joseph, and before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Matt. 1 : 18. Joseph was minded to put her away privily, but the angel commanded him in a dream, saying, Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife : for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. Matt. 1 : 20.

2, Joseph is indeed called the "father" of Jesus, *e. g.*, by Mary, Luke 2 : 48. In verse 41 His parents are spoken of; in verse 51 it is said that He was subject

unto them. This means that during the childhood of Jesus, Joseph exercised over Him parental authority, according to the will of God, and that Jesus yielded to him obedience. By the Jews Jesus was supposed to be a son of Joseph. Luke 3: 23, John 6: 42: Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? This was in accordance with the divine counsel and Providence that Jesus might not appear as illegitimate before the people, which would have rendered His activity among them impossible.

3, God had not created a man, Jesus, with whom the Son of God would unite Himself, but the eternal Son of God entered into humanity, in that He took upon Himself the very nature of man. How is this possible? So asked the virgin, and she received from the angel the answer, With God nothing is impossible. Luke 1: 37. The birth, the incarnation of the Son of God was miraculous, it is the miracle of all miracles, and remains (1 Tim. 3: 16) without controversy the great mystery, God . . . in the flesh, before which we bow in reverence and adoration. In the instruction of youth it is sufficient to say that the Virgin Mary was the mother of Jesus and that Christ had no father on earth; that God alone was His father, and that Joseph, the husband of Mary, was His foster-father.

d) The Son of God took upon Himself the very nature of man.

He did not assume human form for the sake of mere appearance, or become visible merely as did the angels when they appeared unto men; but He became, in body and soul, a real man. Further, He is called not "a Son of man," but "the Son of man," because as the Son of God He assumed humanity, that as very God and very man He might be our true and only Mediator. Heb. 2: 14; 10: 5, 1 John 1: 1, 2, Luke 24: 39. The importance of the doctrine of the true human-

ity of Christ appears from 1 John 4: 1-3, according to which they are "false prophets," who deny that Jesus Christ "is come in the flesh," *i. e.*, that the eternal Son of God took upon Himself the very nature of man. This is the spirit of antichrist. 1 Tim. 2: 5.

II. Why the Son of God Became Man.

A) "That He might also be the true seed of David."

1. God had promised that the Redeemer should be a descendant of Abraham (Gen. 22: 18), of the tribe of Judah (Gen. 49: 10) and of the family of David. 2 Sam. 7: 12, Isa. 9: 6, 7; 11: 1, 10, Jer. 23: 5, 6; 33: 15, 16. Of the two genealogies of Christ, that of Luke (3: 23-38) reaches back to Adam, to establish His claim as the "Son of man." On the other hand, that of Matthew begins with David, to present Him as David's Son. Matt. 1: 1. The Apostles lay great stress upon Christ's descent from David. Peter, Acts 2: 30, Paul, 13: 23, Rom. 1: 3. Referring to Isa. 11: 1, 10, Christ is designated (Rev. 5: 5) by one of the elders before the throne and by Himself (Rev. 22: 16) the Root of David.

2. When Christ was born, the people were animated by an expectation of the promised Messiah (Luke 2: 38), which at the time of His appearance was intensified through the preaching of the Baptist who went before Him. To the people the promise and designation of the Redeemer as the "Son of David" was the most familiar. Matt. 12: 23; 21: 9.

3. Both Joseph and Mary belonged by direct descent to the family of David. Therefore they must go to Bethlehem, their native city, for enrollment. Luke 2: 3-5. It would not have been necessary for Mary, the betrothed of Joseph, to be enrolled, if she had not been a descendant of David, and therefore a representative of one branch of his family.

B) "Like unto his brethren (*i. e.*, like unto men) in all things." Heb. 2: 17, 18, Phil. 2: 7.

1. He was born like any other child. Luke 2: 7.

2. As a child He grew in body and soul after the manner of men. Luke 2: 40, 46, 52. The man Jesus had to "learn the Scriptures," and He taught what was given Him of the Father. Heb. 5: 8: Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered. Menken (4, 261): "He walked by faith, and not by sight. His faith began with the first instruction which He received from His mother Mary. He held it firmly, even in the most distressing, distracting circumstances of life, and perfected it under deepest darkness, when exposed to all the subtle assaults of the devil, being forsaken by God and man."

3. It was possible for Him to be tempted, and it was necessary for Him to struggle against the assaults of evil. Matt. 4: 1, Heb. 2: 18.

4. He had human wants. He ate and drank and slept. Matt. 11: 19; 8: 24. Even after His resurrection He ate and drank. Acts 10: 41.

5. He felt human weakness. He hungered and thirsted and was weary. Matt. 4: 2; 21: 18, John 19: 28; 4: 6.

6. He had human sensibilities. He rejoiced, was troubled and sorrowful, groaned and wept. Luke 10: 21; 12: 50, Matt. 26: 37, 38, John 11: 33, 35, Luke 19: 41, Heb. 5: 7. We read in the Scriptures of three occasions when Christ wept, but nowhere that He laughed. He was, however, cheerful.

7. He was mortal. Matt. 27: 50, John 19: 33, 34.

C) "Sin excepted."

1. It was necessary for the Son of God to become man that He might bear the punishment of sin for the redemption of sinners, and by His sufferings and death make satisfaction for the sins of the world. He, there-

fore, took upon Himself our flesh and blood, with all its weaknesses through sin. Rom. 8: 3, 2 Cor. 5: 21.

2. Even though the Son of God took upon Himself human nature in a condition of infirmity through sin, He did not thereby become a partaker of sin itself. He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and, therefore, was born without hereditary taint or guilt. And though, as true man, it was possible for Him to be tempted, He triumphed over temptation and is, therefore, truly without sin. Heb. 7: 26; 4: 15, 1 John 3: 5.

3. But upon Him, as our Surety and Mediator, though in Him there dwelt neither sin nor guilt, God laid all our debt of sin; to Him He imputed it. And Jesus bore the same, feeling in body and soul the weight of the heavy burden, from the time of His conception until His death upon the cross. Isa. 53, John 1, Mark 14: 34, Luke 22: 44, Matt. 27: 46, Heb. 5: 7.

III. The Two Natures in Christ.

1. In Christ, the incarnate Son of God, we distinguish, in accordance with His deity and His humanity, a divine and a human nature, which in Him however united in one person. They are distinct and yet not divided, unmixed and yet not separated.

2. Zwingli: "The Son of God, very God, so assumed human nature that the divine was not lost or transformed into the human, but both are in Him truly, really and essentially, and in such a way that His human nature lost nothing, and He is no less truly, really and essentially God. But the human nature has not so completely passed over into the divine nature, that He is not truly, really and essentially man, with the exception of the tendency to sin. And in so far as He is God, His union with the Father and the Holy Ghost is such that He nevertheless possesses every-

thing that is essential to and characteristic of human nature, and has lost nothing through His union with the divine nature, except that He is without sin. Therefore the characteristics of both natures are easily traceable in all His words and acts, so that a pious mind readily recognizes what is to be attributed to the one or to the other nature, even though it is true that everything pertains to the one Christ."

3. The Belgic Confession of Faith, Article 19, says: "But these two natures are so united and bound together in one person, that they were not separated even by His death. That which Christ, when dying, commended into the hands of His Father, was in reality His human spirit, which departed from His body. Luke 23: 46, Matt. 27: 50. Meanwhile the divine nature remained united with the human, even in the grave. So that the Godhead did not cease to be in Him any more than it did when He was an infant, though for a short time it did not so clearly manifest itself. Wherefore we confess that He is very God and very man. Very God that He might by His power conquer death, and very man that He might according to the infirmity of His flesh suffer death for us."

4. Olevianus: "A personal union is such a connection of two unlike natures, that the two constitute one person. Thus body and soul in man are unlike; for the body can be seen and laid hold of, but not the soul; the body may be dismembered and will die, but not the soul, and yet they are united in such a manner that both body and soul belong to the being of a man. As body and soul constitute one man, so God and man unite in one Christ, as the Christian Church has always rightly confessed. From this comparison it will be more readily understood what the Word of God teaches concerning the personal union of the two natures in Christ, viz., that it is such a connection of two unlike

natures, of the divine and the human in Christ, that although the one, the divine, created heaven and earth, and is without beginning, the other, the human, is and remains created, and had a beginning. The one is almighty, for it is true God; the other is not. For the creature, the humanity of Christ, is not the Creator, and there are not two that are almighty, but one, although there are two natures. The one, the divine, is infinite; it can not be limited or circumscribed in space. The other is finite, and is composed of definite members, of head, arms, chest, limbs, feet, all of which in their several places differ from each other. Although I say that both these natures have their special sphere and characteristics, yet are they so united that both the one as well as the other belong to the being and substance of the one person, Christ.

“With Paul and Peter, however, God is not personally united; for although the divine dwells in them, it is not so united with them that it belongs to the being of Peter and of Paul, that one could say: God and Peter constitute one person, or this man Peter is God, as is true of Christ. This description of the personal union is based upon the facts involved in the conception of Christ. For then the personal union was consummated, and after that no other personal union of the two natures in Christ was developed.”

5. Ursinus, who drew up the Confession of the Theological Professors and Pastors of Heidelberg, treats the doctrine in that paper as follows: “The word man signifies a person in whom dwells human nature, whether he have in addition to this another nature, as is the case with the man Christ Jesus, who was also divine, or this alone, as is the case with other men. The word humanity or human nature, however, does not embrace two or more natures, but only this one, consisting of a human body and soul. So also the word

God signifies a person who is God, *i. e.*, in whom the divine nature resides, whether He be at the same time different, as is the case with the second person of the Godhead, the eternal Son, who is also man, or be God alone, as are the Father and the Holy Ghost. The word Deity (Gottheit), however, signifies and embraces only the divine nature and being. We can, therefore, rightly and truthfully say : God is man, God suffered and died for us, arose from the dead and ascended into heaven. But it would not be true to say : the Deity (Gottheit) is human, suffered, died, rose again and ascended into heaven. It is also true that the man Christ Jesus is God, but it is not true that the humanity of Christ is deified. And so likewise it is true that the man Christ is almighty, omniscient, everywhere present and worketh all things that the Deity worketh. But that the humanity of Christ is almighty, omniscient, and everywhere present and worketh all things that the Deity worketh, is as far from the truth as it is to say that the humanity is divine."

Question 36.

What profit dost thou receive by Christ's holy conception and nativity?

That he is our mediator, and with his innocence and perfect holiness covers, in the sight of God, my sins, wherein I was conceived and brought forth.

1. Olevianus mentions a threefold benefit of the "holy conception and birth of Christ."

"First, that He is our only Mediator in every thing that devolves upon us in relation to God, the one who partakes not only of one, but of both natures, viz., the human and the divine. Gal. 3 : 20, 1 Tim. 2 : 5.

"Secondly, that He is a Mediator in whom the divine love, which surpasses heaven and earth, first exists, and in whose heart it abides personally, a heart which cherishes true brotherly love and fidelity toward us.

“Thirdly, that He is also a Mediator, whose body and soul were completely sanctified in their conception. First, that He might become a pure and holy offering, in which the penalty of our sinful conception, with all the fruits thereof, is forever paid, and we, therefore, are declared free from its guilt; not that there is in us no longer any original sin, but that it is no longer imputed to us. Secondly, that by the power of His perfect holiness He gradually sanctifies our sinful body and soul, until at last we are entirely delivered from the inborn malady; that He will graciously renew our nature after the image of God, with the same Holy Ghost by which the eternal Word, viz., the Son, sanctified His body and soul in the womb. Heb. 2: 11; 7: 26.”

2. Ursinus: “The benefit of the holy conception and birth of Christ is two-fold:

“First, the confirmation of the faith that He is the Mediator; secondly, the comfort that through this Mediator we become righteous before God. This conclusion follows from the fact that there can be no Mediator between God and man who is not himself man, who is not righteous, who is not one with the Eternal Word (John 1), *i. e.*, one who is truly and really God and man and able to preserve for us the purchased redemption. Heb. 7: 26.”

B. THE WORK OF CHRIST. (Ques. 37–52.)

Question 37.

What dost thou understand by the words “he suffered?”

That he, all the time he lived on earth, but especially at the end of his life, sustained in body and soul, the wrath of God against the sins of all mankind; that so by his passion, as the only propitiatory sacrifice, he might redeem our body and soul from everlasting damnation; and obtain for us the favor of God, righteousness, and eternal life.

I. The Suffering of Christ.

1. To the redemptive work of Christ belong His life, suffering and death. This is comprehended in the word suffering. For 1) it was the object of His incarnation to redeem us by His suffering and death, and 2) His whole life was a passion, commencing with His birth and ending with His death.

2. Christ suffered :

a) In body. Ps. 22 : 14-16.

b) In soul. Matt. 26 : 38.

c) All the time He lived on earth. Isa. 53 : 3.

d) Especially (*i. e.*, in an especially high degree) at the end of His life. Matt. 27 : 46, 50.

3. This is established in detail in the history of Christ's life and suffering.

A) ALL THE TIME HE LIVED ON EARTH.

a) In body : 1) The birth in the inn, Luke 2 : 7 ; 2) The flight to Egypt (the hardships of the journey) Matt. 2 : 14 ; 3) Hunger, thirst and fatigue, Matt. 4 : 2, John 4 : 6, 7 ; 4) Poverty, Luke 9 : 58.

b) In soul : 1) The temptation by the devil, Matt. 4 : 1 ; 2) The hatred of His enemies, Heb. 12 : 3 ; He was reviled as a glutton and a wine-bibber, Matt. 11 : 19, a blasphemer, Matt. 9 : 3, a child of the devil, Matt. 12 : 24 ; He was rejected at Nazareth, his native city, Luke 4 : 29 ; He was persecuted, Matt. 21 : 46 ; They threatened to stone Him, John 8 : 59 ; 3) The inconstancy of the people, John 6 : 14 ; 7 : 20 ; 4) The weak faith of His disciples, Matt. 8 : 26, Mark 8 : 33 ; 5) Sorrow over the power of death among men, John 11 : 33, 35 ; 6) Anxiety in view of His own death, Luke 12 : 50.

B) AT THE END OF HIS LIFE.

a) In body : 1) Drops of bloody sweat, Luke 22 : 44 ; 2) He is bound, John 18 : 12 ; 3) They spit in

His face and buffet Him, Matt. 26 : 67 ; 4) He is scourged and crowned with thorns, Matt. 27 : 26, 29 ; 5) He must bear His own cross, John 19 : 17 ; 6) He is nailed to the cross, John 19 : 18 ; 20 : 25, 27 ; 7) He suffers burning thirst, John 19 : 28 ; 8) He dies a painful death, Matt. 27 : 50.

b) In soul : 1) His agony in Gethsemane, Matt. 26 : 37, Luke 22 : 44 ; 2) The betrayal by Judas, Luke 22 : 48 ; 3) Forsaken by all the disciples, Mark 14 : 50 ; 4) Denied by Peter, Luke 22 : 61 ; 5) The false testimony against Him, Matt. 26 : 60 ; 6) The mockery of the soldiers, Matt. 27 : 29 ; 7) The cry of the people, crucify Him ! Mark 15 : 14 ; 8) The railing of the multitude at the cross, Mark 15 : 29, 30 ; 9) Forsaken by God, Matt. 27 : 46.

In catechetical instruction it is not advisable to introduce in detail and to comment upon the entire history of Christ's passion, but the instruction should be limited to the points above introduced, taking it for granted that catechumens are familiar with biblical history.

II. The Cause of Christ's Suffering.

1. Not His own sin or guilt was the cause of Christ's suffering (compare Ques. 10 : 1, 2), but "the wrath of God against the sins of all mankind," *i. e.*, the judicial punishment of death and condemnation which God hath decreed against humanity ("the human race" or human nature, in which sin propagates itself) on account of sin. Isa. 53 : 4-6. Verse 11 : He shall bear their iniquities (*i. e.*, He atones for sin by enduring the penalty, and, therefore, satisfies, in the place of man, God's violated law). That this prophecy has been fulfilled in Christ, the Apostle Peter attests, 1 Peter 2 : 24 : Who his own self bare our sins in his own body upon the tree (literally, has carried them in His own body upon the wood, *i. e.*, the cross).

2. "The sins of all mankind." John 1 : 29, 1 John 2 : 2.

3. That Christ was to bear the sins of the world through His sufferings, rests upon the counsel and will of God. Acts 2 : 23, 1 Cor. 15 : 3, Isa. 53.

III. The Purpose of Christ's Suffering.

1. The purpose of Christ's suffering was our redemption from sin and its punishment, and for the attainment of this end the death of Christ, including His suffering, was a sacrificial death. "That so by his passion, as the only propitiatory sacrifice, he might redeem our body and soul from everlasting damnation," *i. e.*, set free, redeem, liberate. Isa. 53 : 10, Rom. 5 : 10, 1 Cor. 5 : 7.

2. The sacrificial altar was the cross upon Calvary. The sacrifice of Christ was a burnt-offering. He was offered "upon the tree." The fire which consumed Him was, besides the glowing heat of the sun to which He was exposed during the day, and the burning of His wounds which caused His death, the fire of God's wrath against the sins of all mankind which rested upon Him.

3. Christ's sacrifice was voluntary. John 10 : 18, Matt. 26 : 53, Eph. 5 : 2. By His voluntary acceptance of a sacrificial death, Christ's sacrifice far exceeds all the typical sacrifices of the old covenant.

4. The sacrifice of Christ was made for us, *i. e.*, not only for our benefit, but in our stead. It is, therefore, also a vicarious sacrifice. Matt. 20 : 28, 2 Cor. 5 : 14, 1 Tim. 2 : 6.

5. Christ suffered only in His human nature, in which His divine nature sustained Him. 1 Peter 2 : 24 : In His own body . . . ; Heb. 10 : 10 : Through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

6. The sacrifice of Christ was made but once, and it

avails for all times, and its effects reach unto eternity. Heb. 9 : 12 ; 7 : 25 : Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost (literally : perfectly) that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.*

Christ's sacrifice avails also for believers under the old covenant who lived before Him, since they received the forgiveness of sins, not through the animal sacrifices (Heb. 10 : 4), which were only types of the one sacrifice of Christ upon the cross, but through faith in the promised redemption by Christ Jesus. Rom. 3 : 25, 26.

IV. The Benefits of Christ's Suffering.

This benefit is two-fold : 1) That Christ through His suffering redeemed our body and soul from everlasting damnation, and 2) obtained for us the favor of God, righteousness and eternal life.

He has not only averted the incalculable harm that was threatening us, but has also secured for us the greatest benefit.

1. He has redeemed us, body and soul, from everlasting damnation, for He suffered and bore the punishment in His own body and soul for us who are partakers of sin in body and soul. Gal. 3 : 13, Eph. 1 : 7, 1 Cor. 15 : 55, 57.

2. He has secured for and brought to us :

a) The favor of God, *i. e.*, the divine pleasure in those who are cleansed from sin by the blood of Christ. Rom. 5 : 2.

*Since Christ made a sacrifice on the cross once for all, Christians have no other "altar." Wherefore the Reformed Church, as also the Church of the first centuries, does not recognize an altar in the house of the Lord. It makes use of a table for the celebration of the Lord's Supper, which Christ also instituted and celebrated with His disciples, not at an altar, but at a table.

b) Righteousness, since we are justified before God by faith on account of Christ's merits. 2 Cor. 5 : 21.

c) Eternal life, which begins not after death, but immediately upon the regeneration of the sinner, as all life has its beginning in birth. John 3 : 14, 15, 1 John 4 : 9.

The three parts : The favor of God, righteousness and eternal life are expressed in the one passage, Rom. 5 : 21 : That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Question 38.

Why did he suffer under Pontius Pilate, as his judge?

That he, being innocent, and yet condemned by a temporal judge, might thereby free us from the severe judgment of God, to which we were exposed.

I. The Innocence of Christ.

1. Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, was the highest imperial officer and judge in Judea, and he only could authorize the death penalty, a power that was taken away from the highest court of the Jewish people, the Sanhedrim, when their land passed under the Roman yoke.

2. That Christ was condemned under Pontius Pilate, is historical testimony to the fulfillment of prophecy, Gen. 49 : 10, as well as proof of the fulfillment of Christ's own prediction, recorded in Luke 18 : 32, 33, "For he shall be delivered unto the gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on, and they shall scourge him and put him to death, and the third day he shall rise again."

3. Christ was not to suffer death at the hands of his enemies privately or in a public tumult, but was to be openly sentenced by a regular judge, and that by a gentile, after the rulers of the Jews had condemned Him to death. Acts 4 : 27.

4. The trial of Christ before a temporal, *i. e.*, a legal tribunal, served the purpose of bringing out His innocence, in accordance with which He suffered death, although without personal sin and guilt. Pilate examined Him twice, first in his own palace, and afterwards before the rulers of the people. At three different times he declared His innocence before the people, besides appealing to a like judgment of Herod, and, in addition, performing the symbolical act of washing his hands, making a total of five attestations. The warning of his wife Claudia Procula carried with it the same testimony. Matt. 27, Luke 23, John 18, 19.

5. The Apostles lay stress upon the fact that Christ stood before Pilate as historical testimony (Acts 3: 13, 14; 13: 28), and that He was innocently condemned. 1 Tim. 6: 13.

II. His Condemnation for Us.

1. Although the innocence of Christ was acknowledged and declared before the temporal judge, yet was He condemned. Humanly speaking, the reason is to be found in the clamorous demonstrations of His enemies and the vacillation of Pilate, who feared his own deposition (John 19: 12), besides being influenced by an uneasy conscience on account of his many deeds of violence (Luke 13: 1) and extortion. But the ultimate ground (hidden also from the Jews, Acts 3: 17: I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers) lay in the counsel and will of God, according to which the cruel sentence of death which He must suffer on our account was to pass upon the innocent surety. Therefore the sentence of death must also be pronounced by divinely constituted authority, John 19: 11: "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." Nevertheless the guilt of the condemnation rests upon

Pilate, whose hands might be cleansed with water, but not his conscience (Matt. 27 : 24), and upon the people who cried : " His blood be on us, and on our children." Verse 25.

2. The condemnation of Christ by a temporal judge, who attested His innocence, doubly assures us that He did not suffer for His own sins, but for ours, and " thereby freed us from the severe judgment of God, to which we were exposed." 2 Cor. 5 : 21, Rom. 13 : 1 ; 8 : 1, John 5 : 24.

Question 39

Is there anything more in his being crucified, than if he had died some other death ?

Yes, there is ; for thereby I am assured that he took on him the curse which lay upon me ; for the death of the cross was accursed of God.

I. Christ a Curse for Us.

1. It would be inconceivable, and was not according to the counsel and law of God, that Christ should suffer " some other death," *i. e.*, in consequence of illness or the infirmities of age. Since He was to be the offering for our sins, and in accordance with the divine order and law there could be no forgiveness of sins without the shedding of blood. Christ must die a violent death. Heb. 9 : 22.

2. Of all the modes of death and of bodily punishment, crucifixion was the bitterest.

a) It was the most painful and agonizing death, because the one crucified was slowly consumed by terrible pains in his limbs and vital organs, and by fever heat, while his soul suffered the most excruciating tortures. Ps. 22 : 14.

b) It was the most disgraceful death. Only slaves, seditious persons, highway robbers (such as the two who were crucified with Christ) were crucified. Isaiah 53 : 3.

c) It was accursed of God. A special curse lay upon it, since this mode of execution represented the extreme penalty for an offence punishable by death. Deut. 21 : 23, Isa. 53 : 4.

3. Through the death of Christ upon the cross prophecy was fulfilled.

a) The prophecy in the type of the brazen serpent. Num. 21 : 6-9. The brazen serpent erected upon a pole that all who looked upon it in faith might be healed, was made in the form of the fiery serpents by which the children of Israel had been bitten. So also Christ, "in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. 8 : 3), was elevated upon the cross, that whosoever should look upon Him in faith, might not perish because of the bite of the old serpent (Gen. 3), and because of the consequences of sin in the flesh. Christ Himself declared that the brazen serpent was a type of Himself. John 3 : 14, 15.

b) The prophecy of Christ Himself. Matt. 20 : 19, John 18 : 31, 32. John evidently had in mind the words of Jesus (John 3 : 14, 15), in which He intimated this death.

4. The Providence of God in the condemnation of Jesus to die upon the cross is worthy of notice.

Before the ecclesiastical court of the people of Israel He was accused of blasphemy, the greatest crime against the law of God, and, although the testimony of the false witnesses did not agree and no proof of His guilt was offered, yet He was condemned to death. The Jews said to Pilate: We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God. John 19 : 7. According to the law of Moses, stoning was the punishment for blasphemy. Lev. 24 : 16. This punishment could be further intensified by hanging the body of the person stoned to death upon a tree or pole as a special indignity. Since the Jews were not allowed

to execute this sentence, and blasphemy of the God of Israel did not constitute a ground of condemnation before the temporal court, the rulers of the people accused Jesus before Pilate of sedition, the most heinous civil offence. Mark 15 : 12, John 18 : 33. (Compare also the superscription on the cross, which indicated the nature of the accusation, Matt. 27 : 37). Although in the trial the innocence of Jesus was established, yet He was condemned to death by the temporal court as the King of Israel, as He had been condemned by the ecclesiastical court as the Son of God. The punishment for sedition among the Romans was crucifixion. With the nature of this death, elevation upon the cross, corresponds the penalty provided by the law of Moses for blasphemy, viz., that one who had been stoned was also hanged.

5. In accordance with the counsel and will of God, Jesus was to die upon the cross, yet the men who were responsible for His crucifixion, carried the guilt of their own sins. Pilate ended his life by suicide while in banishment, to which the Emperor sentenced him, upon the accusation of the Jews, on account of his numerous acts of injustice. The Jews cried out against Jesus : Away, away with Him, crucify Him ! (John 19 : 15.) At the siege of Jerusalem by the Romans (in the year 70 A. D.), the Jews, impelled by hunger, escaped in large numbers from the city into the camp of the Romans. Titus commanded all to be crucified in sight of the city, and oftentimes no less than 500 were hanging before the walls. Jerusalem itself was entirely destroyed after it had been conquered, and the people were scattered in all lands. It was the day of wrath and the revelation of the righteous "judgment of God." Rom. 2 : 5.

II. The Removal of the Curse From us Through the Death of Christ Upon the Cross.

1. Death upon the cross was “accursed of God,” corresponding to death by hanging among the Jews. Deut. 21 : 22, 23.

2. Christ was guiltless, yet voluntarily took upon Himself the accursed death of the cross, and thereby “took on Him the curse (*i. e.*, the heaviest penalty for sin) which lay upon me,” and removed it from me. Of this I am assured by the death of Christ upon the cross. Gal. 3 : 13, Deut. 21 : 23, Col. 2 : 14, Heb. 12 : 2 ; 13 : 12, 13.

3. The cross was the symbol of the deepest ignominy. In Christ it has become the symbol of highest honor, so that the announcement of redemption by Jesus Christ is called the preaching of the cross. 1 Cor. 1 : 18 ; 2 : 2. The cross has become the symbol of Christianity, and it has also been perverted into a superstitious sign.

Question 40.

Why was it necessary for Christ to humble himself even unto death ?

Because with respect to the justice and truth of God, satisfaction for our sins could be made no otherwise than by the death of the Son of God.

I. In Relation to the Justice of God.

1. In accordance with the righteousness of God the sinner had to die. Because Christ appeared for us, *i. e.*, in our stead before the judgment of God, it was necessary to execute God’s justice upon Him, and He had to die, thus paying the penalty, *i. e.*, rendering satisfaction for us. Gen. 2 : 17, Rom. 6 : 23 ; 1 : 32, Matt. 20 : 28, Rom. 5 : 8.

II. In Relation to the Truth of God.

That the Son of God was to die for our sins, had been foretold of God by word and types in the Old Testament, and on account of the truth of God these prophecies must be fulfilled. Isa. 53 : 10, Luke 24 : 26.

a) By word. Ps. 18 : 4, 5 ; 22 : 15, Isa. 53 : 8.

b) In types. The sacrifice of Isaac, Gen. 22 ; all the sacrifices (Heb. 9 : 9-14), especially the sacrifice on the great day of atonement (Heb. 10 : 12, 14) ; the paschal lamb (1 Cor. 5 : 7).

III. For Whom Christ Died.

The power of Christ's death becomes manifest only in God's chosen ones, *i. e.*, true believers.

Question 41.

Why was he also buried ?

Thereby to prove that he was really dead.

I. The Burial of Christ as Evidence of His Death.

Persons that were crucified often hung upon the cross more than a day before death took place. The Jews were required by their law to take down persons crucified on the day of their execution (Deut. 21 : 23), and therefore it was their custom to break the limbs of those crucified who were still living in order to hasten their death. Jesus had expired at three o'clock in the afternoon (Matt. 27 : 46), and when toward evening, at the request of the Jews, Pilate gave the command that their legs be broken and they be taken down, the soldiers broke the legs of the two thieves, but not those of Jesus when they saw that He was already dead. When the soldier thrust his spear into Jesus' side, blood and water flowed forth, proving that death had taken place. John 19 : 31-35. The soldiers were convinced by what they saw and by the test they had made that Jesus was really

dead. After the announcement was made to Pilate by the captain of the guard (Mark 15: 44, 45), permission was given to Joseph of Arimathea and to Nicodemus to bury Him. His burial and what preceded it constitute a four-fold evidence of His actual death. The firm establishment of the fact of his death is important because it precludes the possibility of a mere swoon or an apparent death. Christ must really, actually die if redemption was to be accomplished, and if the resurrection was to be a progression from death unto life. 1 Cor. 15: 4, Isa. 53: 9. Jesus had cited his burial as witnessing for Him. Matt. 12: 40. So also in the parable, John 12: 24: Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

II. The Benefit of Christ's Burial to Us.

1. From the burial of Christ we receive a two-fold benefit.

a) The admonition that we be buried with Him spiritually, *i. e.*, in His redemption, and that we be separated from sin and the world, Rom. 6: 4.

b) The comfort that His burial takes away the fear of the grave and sanctifies our rest in the tomb. Jesus was laid into a "new" tomb "wherein never man before was laid." (Matt. 27: 60, Luke 23: 53.) Job 17: 13, Ps. 6: 5. Whoever came in contact with a grave, according to the law of Moses, (Num. 19: 16, 18) was unclean for seven days. Rev. 14: 13.

2. Olevianus. "The first benefit that we receive from His burial is the confirmation of our faith. We are not to doubt, since Christ died for us and was buried, that He humbled Himself for us in such measure, that neither death nor the grave can hurt us, because the Father's wrath has been appeased. For just as the vehemence of the sea ceased and it became calm when Jonah

(who was a type of Christ) was cast out of the ship and swallowed by the whale, so Christ also declared in advance that He should be cut off out of the land of the living and be laid into the bosom of the earth in order that He might reconcile the Father and calm His wrath.

“As in the first place the burial of Christ serves to strengthen our faith and confidence in God, enabling us to see more clearly the reconciled, fatherly heart of God, so also it is to promote our sanctification. For as Christ, having died for sin, rested in the grave, so also we, by the power of our communion with Christ, are to see to it that our old man be buried with Christ, by faith in Him and by the testimony of holy baptism; that after our consciences have found peace in Christ, we rest from our former evil works and allow God to accomplish His work in us, and that we begin in our consciences here on earth the eternal Sabbath (Jesus remained in the grave over the Sabbath), until it be perfected, when we enter into eternal rest with Christ.”

3. The mode of interment among the ancients was by burial in the ground or by depositing the bodies of the dead in vaults. The first burial of which there is a record in the Scriptures is that in the family-vault of Abraham in the cave of Machpelah. Gen. 23. Not only Israel, but also the oldest civilized nations, the Babylonians, Assyrians and Egyptians, buried their dead. That burial in the ground is in accordance with God's order may, to a certain extent, be inferred from His words to Adam, For dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return; and from His promise to Abraham, Gen. 15: 15, And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. Deut. 34: 6, And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab. Cremation was introduced later only among the heathen. The effort to introduce this custom among

Christian people is made on the one hand by those who not only have departed from the Christian faith, but who are consciously or unconsciously antagonistic to it. The movement is in reality directed against the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. In itself it is the same to Almighty God whether he raises the new body out of the dust of decomposition or the ashes of incineration. Otherwise, what of the countless martyrs who died upon the funeral pile? On account of this enmity, and because Christ hallowed the grave, the believing Christian will not consent to the cremation of his body, but will insist upon its burial.

4. Because the grave has been hallowed for the believing Christian, by Christ's rest therein, the dedication of Christian cemeteries is a superfluous ceremony. The only act of dedication that can properly take place is the ceremony connected with the first interment.

A "consecration" (Einsegnung) of the body is, according to Reformed principles, wholly improper, since for the reception of a blessing man must necessarily use his soul as the organ, but which is no longer present in the body. The "consecration" of the dead was not practiced in the Evangelical Church until it arose in the present century in the Lutheran Church, and here and there has also crept into Reformed circles. So also the formula, "the peace of God rest upon this grave," has no sense, because God's peace is a spiritual possession which cannot be imparted to a lump of clay. So also there is no propriety in commending the departed spirit to the grace of God, since after death that grace benefits neither the believer nor the unbeliever. There is an old saying, "As you believe so you live, and as you live so you die. And as you die so you go, and where you go there you remain." The early Reformed church knew nothing of the present-day style of funeral discourses which are, to a great extent, imitations of the

ancient heathen eulogies of the dead, and which, according to the classification of Heinrich Mueller (in his "Hours of Refreshment"), fall under the head of "Leichenrede — Luegenrede" (funeral discourse — lying discourse); neither did it approve of pompous display at funerals. So also the ancient Christian church knew nothing of flowers and wreaths upon burial caskets, which formed part of the funeral observances of the heathen of those days.

The constitution of the Church of the Palatinate of 1563 contained this paragraph: "At burials all popish and superstitious ceremonies are to be avoided. We are, however, to commit our dead to the earth with honor, as it is becoming, with such services as may be of profit to the living. In funeral discourses and addresses at the grave the minister shall abstain from excessive praise. The sermons or exhortations shall be chiefly directed to the instruction of those who attend the burial, that they may learn how to live a Christian life and how to die happy.

Question 42.

Since then Christ died for us, why must we also die?

Our death is not a satisfaction for our sins, but only an abolishing of sin, and a passage into eternal life.

I. Our Death Not a Punishment for Sin.

1. Death was appointed to man by God in the beginning as a penalty for sin. Gen. 2: 17. Rom. 6: 23, 1 Cor. 15: 56, Heb. 9: 27. That for the sinner temporal death is a penalty, *i. e.*, a punishment for sin, and yet does not pay, *i. e.*, discharge the debt, but on the other hand is for him only the introduction to judgment and to eternal death, this it is that fills the natural man with dread of death, and that makes them "through fear of death all their life time subject to bondage."

2. For believers, for whom Christ died and who live in Him, the relation to temporal death (of which only we treat here) has been changed. In accordance with the counsel and will of God, death retains its place as the end of the earthly life. 1 Cor. 15: 26. Since Christ by His death has fully satisfied for all my sins, my death is no longer a satisfaction for my sins. Since in Christ I enjoy the forgiveness of sins, I cannot die in my sins. In this way death has been robbed of its sting and power, so that the fear of death no longer abides in my heart. Heb. 2: 14, 2 Tim. 1: 10.

II. Our Death a Complete Deliverance From Sin.

1. Temporal death is a blessing to believers. For it is the end of all outward and inward distress and of all misery, which is their portion in the body of this death here on earth. On the contrary, to be compelled to remain in this vale of sin and misery until the time when heaven and earth shall be renewed, would be for them a burden so grievous as scarcely to be endured. Rom. 7: 24. On the other hand it is not possible to enter upon eternal life in this mortal body, for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. 1 Cor. 15: 50, 2 Cor. 4: 10.

2. Temporal death is for believers an abolishing of sin.

a) By temporal death, *i. e.*, by the separation of body and soul, the soul of the believer is fully and forever freed from the flesh, in which sin reigns. Rom. 7: 18; 6: 7, Heb. 4: 10.

b) By temporal death we are entirely freed from sin and thereby death becomes for us at the same time the entrance upon eternal life and the glorious liberty of the children of God. Rom. 8: 21, John 5: 24; 12: 26, 2 Cor. 5: 1.

3. Temporal death is to the body of the believer a sleep. John 11 : 11, 1 Cor. 15 : 18. For the soul, departure from the body is gain. Phil. 1 : 21. Therefore the believer often longs for death, 2 Cor. 5 : 2, and has a desire to depart. Phil. 1 : 23. Death has become to the believer, because of the death of Christ, a victory, which he approaches with joy and through which he passes in triumph. 1 Cor. 15 : 55, 57, Acts 7 : 55, 59.

Question 43.

What further benefit do we receive from the sacrifice and death of Christ on the cross ?

That by virtue thereof our old man is crucified, dead, and buried with him ; that so the corrupt inclinations of the flesh may no more reign in us, but that we may offer ourselves unto him a sacrifice of thanksgiving.

I. The Mortification of the Old Man.

1. The first benefit which we receive from the sacrifice and death of Christ on the cross is the forgiveness of our sins and full deliverance from sin in death. This rests upon the justification which He has secured for us. His sacrifice and death upon the cross have a further significance for our life upon earth, since that death also accomplishes our sanctification, the first part of which is the mortification of the old man.

2. As in Christ our relation to death has become changed, so our life itself becomes different. As through Christ's death our death has been transformed into life, so our natural, sinful life shall be given over unto death. The "old man" is not the body, and to give the old man over to death, does not mean that we are to oppress the body by fasting and chastisement. "Our old man" is our inborn, sinful nature, the tendency to sin and its indulgence. And above all the expression refers to the so-called favorite or besetting sins, *i. e.*, particular inclinations to various forms of

sin, *e. g.*, to lying, to anger and hatred, to covetousness, to unchastity, etc.

3. Our old man neither can nor ought to be laid aside merely outwardly, as is a coat. On the contrary, since it is a part of our inward life, we can only be freed from it by its mortification, which, on our part, can be accomplished only by its gradual destruction. The way in which this is to be brought about is indicated by the reference to the death of Christ in the words, “crucified, dead and buried.” In these words the Scriptures speak of the dying of the old man in believers.

a) Crucified. Rom. 6: 6, Gal. 5: 24. Crucifixion is the bitterest death. Such it is also spiritually in the mortification of the old man. Matt. 18: 8, John 12: 25, Luke 14: 26. Crucifixion was also the most ignominious death, and so every one who would live in Christ Jesus, must be prepared to take upon himself the ignominy of the cross of Christ, for it will become his rich portion at the hands of the world and the children thereof. Luke 21: 17, Gal. 6: 14, 1 Cor. 4: 13, Acts 5: 41.

b) Dead. Col. 3: 5, 8, 9, Rom. 6: 11.

c) Buried. Rom. 6: 4, Col. 2: 12.

4. Die (as to the old man) before thou diest (the temporal death), that thou diest not (the eternal death) when thou diest (the temporal death).

II. How the Mortification of the Old Man Takes Place.

1. Our old man died in Christ as the Scriptures teach. Therefore it is also to die in us. The mortification takes place through the destruction of the old man. But this we can accomplish only by “virtue of the sacrifice and death of Christ.” As in our natural birth sin is transmitted to us, so also in our spiritual birth (regeneration) we become partakers of the power of Christ’s death, for the vanquishing of sin in our flesh.

2. The evil desires of the flesh are indeed also active in the regenerate, but they are not allowed to reign over them, *i. e.*, to obtain the supremacy. Rom. 6: 12, 14.

3. We are to make an offering of ourselves to Christ, *i. e.*, out of thankfulness to Him for offering Himself unto death as a sacrifice for us, we are to mortify the old man, to subdue and destroy more and more the corrupt nature that is in us. Ps. 51: 17, Rom. 6: 13.

4. "What does it mean to be dead to the world and to sin?" With this question a youth once came to an old experienced Christian. The elder said: "Go forth into the cemetery and call the dead that they come forth to you out of their graves." The youth was astonished at his words, but went and did as he was requested. He returned to the elder, saying: "The dead will not come." "Then go again," said the elder, "call them, praise them, and make promises to them." This also the youth did, and returning, said: "The dead will not come." The elder said: "Go for the third time and call them, chide and threaten them." The youth did so, and came back with the same answer: "It is of no avail, the dead will not come." "Learn then from the dead," said the elder, "what it means to be dead and buried in Christ to sin and the world,—strenuously to resist the voice of sin and of the world, and not to allow oneself to be moved by its flatteries and allurements, by its reproaches and threatenings."

Question 44.

Why is there added, "he descended into hell?"

That in my greatest temptations, I may be assured, and wholly comfort myself in this, that my Lord Jesus Christ, by his inexpressible anguish, pains, terrors, and hellish agonies, in which he was plunged during all his sufferings, but especially on the cross, hath delivered me from the anguish and torments of hell.

Why Christ Suffered in His Soul the Torments of Hell.

1. The word hell (in Hebrew “Sheol,” in the Greek “Hades,” in the German “Hoelle,” is derived from Hel or Helle, the goddess of the infernal world in German mythology,) has various significations.

Ursinus accepts the three following :

- a)* The grave. Gen. 42 : 38, 1 Kings 2 : 9.
- b)* The place of the damned. Matt. 11 : 23, Luke 16 : 23.
- c)* The anguish and torments of hell. Ps. 116 : 3, Ps. 30 : 3 ; 86 : 13, 1 Sam. 2 : 6.

2. As Christ was not only to redeem us in body, but also in soul from eternal condemnation, so He must not merely die, but also suffer in his soul the torments of hell, the punishment for our sins. This did not occur in the place of the damned, but at His death ; “ my Lord Jesus Christ, by his inexpressible anguish, pains and terrors, which he suffered in his soul upon the cross, and before, hath delivered me from the anguish and torments of hell.”

a) “ Before,” in Gethsemane, when He was “ sorrowful and very heavy,” and His soul was “ exceeding sorrowful, even unto death” (Matt. 26 : 37, 38), when He was “ in an agony,” and “ his sweat was as it were great drops of blood.” Luke 22 : 44.

b) “ Upon the cross,” when He cried out : “ My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me !” Matt. 27 : 46 ; when the father withdrew from him the feeling of His presence and communion, and He suffered the anguish and terror of those who are rejected of God.

3. By Christ’s suffering upon the cross, and before, the torments of hell :

- a)* Prophecy, Hosea 13 : 14, was fulfilled.
- b)* There is secured for me a certain comfort in the midst of my greatest temptations, as in times of doubt

of my redemption and salvation through Christ. Ps. 42: 7, 8, Isa. 49, 1 Thes. 1: 10, 1 Cor. 15: 55, 57.

4. The conception, that Christ felt the torments of hell in His soul, not after His death in the abode of the damned, but in His sufferings in Gethsemane and upon the cross, is undoubtedly the correct one; for His redemptive work was completed by His death. John 19: 30. But this belongs properly to question 37, which treats of the sufferings of Christ. "Especially at the end of his life, he sustained in body and soul the wrath of God against the sins of all mankind." The fact that the expression, "He descended into hell," follows the articles, "was crucified, dead and buried," gives us a hint as to where the soul of Christ remained after His death, while His body lay in the grave. Neither is it said anywhere, that Christ arose from death, but "from the dead."

5. That which in the German translation of the Bible has been rendered "Hoelle"—Sheol, Hades—has in the original in one place the signification grave, in another the place or torment of the damned, then again it signified the realm of the dead, *i. e.*, all who have departed from the earthly life, who are divided into two classes, the saved and the unsaved. Christ remained in death, *i. e.*, in the state of death, as long as body and soul were separated.

6. How we are to conceive of the realm of the dead, appears from the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16: 19–31). In connection with which it is to be remembered that not fancies, but veritable relations always lie at the basis of that which is figurative in the parables of the Lord. Those who have departed from this life, are found in two entirely separate places. Verse 26. From the expression "pass from hence," and from verse 23, where the rich man "lift up his eyes and seeth Abraham afar off," it follows, that the

abode of the saved is on high (in "heaven," where the holy angels carried Lazarus), and the abode of the damned is in the deep (in "hell," where also the fallen angels are). Matt. 25: 41. The Scriptures speak not only of heaven in general, but also of "heavens." Paul was "caught up to the third heaven." 2 Cor. 12: 2. Christ says: "In my Father's house are many mansions." John 14: 2. The abode of the blessed, where the faithful of the Old Covenant enjoy the rest and refreshment of eternal life, is called Abraham's bosom, because unto him, the father of the faithful, are gathered those of his posterity (he was gathered to his people), who are appointed unto eternal life. Thither also the soul of Christ, as a son of Abraham according to the flesh, went at death, where it was in the hands of His heavenly Father, into which He had commended it (His human "spirit," Luke 23: 46), when He died upon the cross. To this points His answer to the thief upon the cross: "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Luke 23: 43. To the highest heaven of glory, upon the throne of majesty, Christ was exalted only by His ascension.

Of a "limbo" or a "purgatory," as the Romish Church teaches, the Scriptures do not know anything, neither of what is taught by the Lutheran Church that Christ, before His appearance as risen, went immediately with body and soul, to the place of the damned, there to celebrate His triumph over hell and the devil.

Question 45.

What does the resurrection of Christ profit us?

First: by his resurrection he hath overcome death, that he might make us partakers of that righteousness, which he had purchased for us by his death. Secondly, we are also by his power raised up to a new life. And lastly, the resurrection of Christ is a sure pledge of our blessed resurrection.

I. The Significance of the Resurrection of Christ.

1. The resurrection of Christ consists in this, that His soul, glorified by the Father, was united with the body, so that the body was reanimated and also glorified; and thus Christ went forth out of the grave alive and glorious.

2. The body, with which Christ arose, was the same that was slain upon the cross and was laid lifeless into the grave, but not without the weakness and mortality of the flesh. John 20: 27, Luke 24: 39-40, Rev. 1: 18, Rom. 6: 9.

3. The resurrection of Christ was the work of the Triune God.

The Father raised Him up. Acts 2: 32, Rom. 6: 4, Heb. 13: 20.

Christ arose through the power of His divinity as the Son. John 2: 19; 10: 18. Through the Holy Ghost the living power of God is ever manifesting itself. John 6: 63, Rom. 8: 11.

4. Christ arose on the third day, not earlier, that His real death might thereby be manifested; not later, because on the third day the decomposition of the body sets in. John 11: 39 (Lazarus). The body of Jesus was not to be subject to decomposition. Acts 13: 35, 37, Ps. 16: 10. The body of Jesus did not suffer decomposition, but came forth from the grave transformed, *i. e.*, glorified.

5. That Christ really and truly arose from the dead, is of greatest importance. For upon it are based all our Christian faith, our salvation and eternal life. 1 Cor. 15: 17-19.

6. The resurrection of Christ is one of the best attested facts. The evidence in its favor is as follows: a) It was foretold in the Old Testament, as well as by Christ Himself. 1 Cor. 15: 4, Ps. 16: 10, Isa. 53: 8.

As types of it under the Old Covenant may be cited : The going forth of Noah out of the ark, Gen. 8 : 16 ; the sacrifice of Isaac, Gen. 22 : 4, 12 ; Joseph's deliverance out of prison and his exaltation, Gen. 41 : 37 ; Aaron's rod that budded, Num. 17 : 1-11 ; Jonah, Matt. 12 : 40. Christ Himself had told His disciples on three different occasions that He would rise again on the third day. Matt. 16 : 21 ; 17 : 23 ; 20 : 19, and in addition, John 2 : 19. *b*) Testimony to it was borne :

1. By His enemies. They knew of Christ's prediction of His resurrection, and they feared it. Matt. 27 : 63, 64. But in spite of the stone, the seal and the watch, He arose. The Roman soldiers, who watched the grave, published everything that had occurred, but were bribed by the Jews to tell a lie. Matt. 28 : 11-15.

2. By the angels. Matt. 28 : 6, Luke 24 : 23.

3. By His appearance to His disciples,—to Mary Magdalene, John 20 : 11-18 ; to the other women, Matt. 28 : 9, 10 ; to Peter, Luke 24 : 34, 1 Cor. 15 : 5 ; to the disciples on the way to Emmaus, Luke 24 : 13-35 ; to the disciples on the evening of the day of the resurrection, when Thomas was absent, John 20 : 19-25 ; to the disciples eight days later when Thomas was present, verses 26-29 ; at the Sea of Tiberias, John 21 : 1-14 ; upon the mountain in Galilee, Matt. 28 : 16 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 6 (he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once ; of whom the greater part remain unto this present—about the year 57 A. D.) ; to James, the Lord's brother, 1 Cor. 15 : 7 ; lastly to the eleven upon the Mount of Olives at the time of His ascension, Mark 16 : 19, Luke 24 : 50, Acts 1 : 4-9.

The Risen One appeared in a glorified body. He ate and drank, not because He needed nourishment, but to convince His disciples of His bodily resurrection. Luke 24 : 39-43, Acts 10 : 41. He suddenly appeared in the midst of them, when they were

assembled with closed doors. No material obstruction intercepted His glorified body. John 20 : 21, 26.

After His ascension, Christ appeared to Stephen, Acts 7 : 55 ; to Paul, Acts 9 : 3, 5, 1 Cor. 15 : 8 ; to John, Rev. 1 : 12-18. To these He also appeared in His glorified bodily form.

4. By His disciples, who had in part failed to comprehend His words, that He would rise again on the third day, and had in part forgotten them, Luke 18 : 33, 34 ; 24 : 21. They were not prepared for the appearances of the Risen One, and were terrified by them, Luke 24 : 37, and to some extent continued to doubt His actual resurrection. John 20 : 25, Mark 16 : 14. When these same disciples, after being fully convinced, and having had the experience of the resurrection of Christ, preached the fact and sealed it by their death, they certainly are unimpeachable witnesses.

5. By the saints of the Old Covenant, who after the resurrection of Christ came forth from their graves and appeared to many in the city of Jerusalem. Matt 27 : 52, 53.

6. By the exalted Savior's own words. Rev. 1 : 18.

7. By the spread and perpetuity of His kingdom upon earth, which must have a living, not a dead King. Matt. 28 : 18, 20.

II. The Threefold Benefit of the Resurrection of Christ.

A. The first benefit is our justification.

1. Christ by His death paid the penalty of sin, and thereby secured our righteousness. Death had no power over Him to hold Him, because He was without sin. Heb. 7 : 26, 27. If Christ had remained in the grave, His death would have been of no benefit to us. 1 Cor. 15 : 17. By His resurrection He proved Himself the Son of God, who made an atonement, not for Himself, but for our guilt, and, therefore, death had no claim upon Him. Rom. 1 : 4 ; 4 : 25.

2. His resurrection was necessary, that He might impart to us His purchased redemption, *i. e.*, the forgiveness of sin, and that it might serve as a divine seal thereof to His people. 2 Tim. 1 : 10, Rev. 3 : 7.

3. Olevianus. "The first benefit is, that the resurrection of Christ is to us a sure testimony that God regards us as righteous, as St. Paul teaches: 'And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.' 1 Cor. 15 : 17. From this we conclude that Christ, being risen, believers no more remain in their sins; not that there is no more sin in them, but that these have been pardoned, and are not reckoned against them. For since Christ died, not for His own sins, but for ours, it must follow that not one of all our sins remains which was not fully punished and paid for, since they were all cast upon the body of Christ. Otherwise Christ could not have arisen, for where yet one sin remains the wages of sin abide, *viz.*, death."

B. The second benefit is our resurrection and sanctification.

1. The death and resurrection of Christ are not a mere judicial process, upon which we may rest in an outward way: for when Christ imparts to us righteousness, which is the fruit of His death and resurrection, we must experience the power of that righteousness within ourselves, and the same conduces to our spiritual resurrection. We are now, *i. e.*, here in this life, raised up out of the life of sin into a new life. This takes place in our quickening or regeneration by the Holy Ghost and through our sanctification, not of ourselves, but "by His (Christ's) power." As the mortification of the old man (Ques. 43, I., 1) by the power of Christ's death is the first part of our sanctification, so the quickening of the new man, the new life in us, by the power of His resurrection, constitutes the second part. Rom. 6 : 4, 6, Col. 2 : 12, 13, 2 Cor. 5 : 17, Phil. 3 : 9-14.

2. Olevianus. "The other benefit is the quickening of the new man. Just as Christ by His resurrection from the dead was declared righteous and free from all our sins, 1 Tim. 3 : 16, and was at the same time quickened by the power of God ; so also whoever is brought by the same power of God to true faith in Christ Jesus (for faith is brought about by the same almighty power of God, by which Jesus was raised from the dead), is declared free from all his sins and righteous in Christ, and together with Him is quickened unto eternal life. Eph. 2 : 4-10. Further, the resurrection of Christ is a pledge that we shall be able to stand fast and to endure unto the end in the faith, which we have received through His power, and that we shall not fall away from Him. For as Christ dieth no more, but liveth a life which can never cease nor be destroyed, Rom. 6 : 10 ; so also those, who are ingrafted into Christ by faith, receive from Him a spiritual life, which is wrought in them by the Holy Ghost, who dwelleth in Christ and in them, a life which can never be extinguished, not even when body and soul are separated from each other. 1 Peter 1 : 3, 5, 9, Gal. 2 : 20. Since then Christ's life has been begun in believers, a life of such a kind and character, that it will never come to an end, so they are to feel assured that He will bring it to perfection.

C. The third benefit is our glorification.

1. As Christ by His death became our surety and paid the penalty of our guilt, so His resurrection is for us the pledge, *i. e.*, the certain assurance, that our bodies, after being subjected to temporal death, will, by virtue of His resurrection, be restored again from the dust and glorified, even as He arose from the dead with His glorified body. John 11 : 25, 26, 1 Cor. 15 : 20, 21. Christ is called the first-fruits of them that are asleep, which signifies that, as in the Old Covenant all

the other fruits of the field were sanctified by the first-fruit of the field, which was offered and devoted to God (Deut. 26), so must also all the members of Christ arise to eternal glory, because their Head, as the first-fruits, arose gloriously.

2. There is a twofold resurrection at the end of the world, one to eternal life, which is the blessed resurrection, and another to judgment or eternal death. John 5 : 29. But of the blessed bodily resurrection only those will have part, who are here spiritually awakened to the new life and walk in it. Rom. 8 : 11.

3. Olevianus. The third benefit is, that "the resurrection of Christ is to us a sure pledge that our bodies shall also arise to eternal life. For since not only our souls, but also our bodies are members of Christ, 1 Cor. 6 : 15, it would be detrimental to the body of Christ, to allow His members forever to remain in death. Therefore it follows, that by the same spirit by which the body of Christ was raised from the dead, and which dwells in our body, we shall be raised from the dead, Rom. 6 : 8, 11, and shall be made like the glorious body of Christ, with complete victory over sin and death, and in perfect righteousness and glory. Phil. 3 : 21. Therefore the happy and blessed resurrection of our flesh and subsequent immortality is already decreed to us by God, since He raised up our Mediator from the dead. 2 Tim. 1 : 10."

Question 46.

How dost thou understand these words, "he ascended into heaven?"

That Christ, in sight of his disciples, was taken up from earth into heaven, and that he continues there for our interest, until he come again to judge the quick and the dead.

1. After His resurrection, Christ communed with His disciples for forty days, appearing to them in various places and conversing with them concerning the

kingdom of God. Acts 1 : 3. These forty days at the close of His redemptive work upon earth, correspond to the forty days in the desert at the beginning of His ministry. For the disciples this occasional intercourse with the Risen One, so different from the earlier daily association with Him, was a preparation for the time, when with their bodily eyes they should no longer see Him who was exalted to heaven.

2. Christ was taken up into heaven.

3. Christ, with respect to His human nature, entered heaven with the same body in which He became man, lived and suffered upon earth, died and rose, and which was now fully glorified. Otherwise His disciples could not have seen Him ascend into heaven. Mark 16 : 19, Luke 24 : 51, Acts 1 : 9, 10.

With respect to His divine nature, Christ, even after His incarnation, was and remained everywhere present, therefore also in heaven. John 3 : 13.

4. Evidence of the ascension of Christ.

a) The prophecies of the Old Testament : 1. In word, Psalm 47 : 5 ; 68 : 18, Col. 1 : 13 ; 2 : 15. 2. In type, Enoch, Gen. 5 : 24 ; Elijah, 2 Kings 2 : 11 ; the high priest who entered into the holy of holies, Heb. 9 : 24.

b) Christ Himself foretold it. John 3 : 13, 16 : 28 ; 20 : 17.

c) His disciples. (Peter) Acts 2 : 33, Eph. 4 : 10, 1 Peter 3 : 22.

d) His subsequent appearances in glory to Stephen, Acts 7 : 55 ; to Paul, Acts 9 : 3 ; 18 : 9 ; to John, Rev. 1 : 7.

e) The outpouring of the Holy Ghost which Christ had promised to send from the Father to His disciples. John 15 : 26, Acts 2 : 2.

5. Christ ascended into heaven "for our interest." John 14 : 3 ; 16 : 7.

6. Christ continues in heaven until His return at the last day. Acts 3 : 21, Matt. 24 : 30, Col. 3 : 1, Phil. 3 : 20.

7. That we do not see the Savior who is exalted in heaven, does not perplex us, but it is a test of our faith. John 20 : 29, 2 Cor. 5 : 7, 1 Peter 1 : 7, 8.

8. Olevianus : “ I believe that Christ ascended into heaven, *i. e.*, I believe that Christ, who, with respect to His divinity, was at all times present in heaven, after He had fulfilled all things upon earth that were given Him to do, and for forty days had instructed His disciples concerning the truth of His resurrection and the kingdom of God, ascended into heaven with the same body, which is of the same substance with our body, which He took upon Himself from the substance (the flesh and blood) of the Virgin Mary, which hung upon the cross, died and was buried, and arose immortal, that He, I say, ascended with the same body and with His human soul from this earth into heaven, where all believers dwell after this life. John 14 : 2.”

Question 47.

Is not Christ with us then, even to the end of the world, as he hath promised?

Christ is very man and very God ; with respect to his human nature, he is no more on earth ; but with respect to his Godhead, majesty, grace and Spirit, he is at no time absent from us.

Question 48.

But if his human nature is not present wherever his Godhead is, are then these two natures in Christ separated from one another?

Not at all ; for since the Godhead is incomprehensible and omnipresent it must necessarily follow that the same is not limited with the human nature he assumed, and yet remains personally united to it.

Both the 47th and the 48th Questions treat of the relation of the two natures in Christ, the divine and the human, after His exaltation to heaven, and relate to

the difference between the Lutheran and the Reformed Church with respect to this doctrine. The Lutheran Church teaches, that with the exaltation of Christ to the right hand of God, all the attributes of the divine, including also omnipresence, were communicated to His human nature. Thus it is intended to prove, that in the Lord's Supper the body and the blood of Christ are substantially present in the bread and wine after their consecration. The inference is thus drawn: The right hand of God is everywhere present. Christ sitteth, with respect to His humanity, at God's right hand. Therefore His humanity is everywhere present. Ursinus very pertinently proves this conclusion to be incorrect: "Because the humanity of Christ is not itself the right hand of God's power, but is seated at the right hand of God, and because not everything that is seated at the right hand of God is on that account everywhere present. For Christ is seated at the right hand of God and conducts His kingly office, in accordance with the attributes of both His natures. With respect to His divinity He is everywhere present: with respect to His humanity He is not present in more than one place at one time, and yet remains Lord over all creatures, who upholds and governs all things by His divine power." In the consideration of these questions we must always be mindful of the fact that our thought and language are limited, and we must hold ourselves within what God has revealed to us in His word and the extent to which He has revealed it.

1. Christ is true God and true man. This is revealed throughout the Scriptures, and we accept this truth in good faith, a truth with which also agrees the promise of the Lord: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28: 20. He is true God, and as such, *viz.*, with respect to His divine essence, He is not limited either before, during or after His life upon

earth. As true man He assumed in His incarnation a body that was limited (limited in space), and as He remains also after His exaltation to the right hand of God in heaven true man, so He also retains the characteristic of limitation in space belonging to a real human body. With respect to His human nature, He is, therefore, no more on earth. Matt. 26 : 11, John 16 : 28, Heb. 8 : 4, John 17 : 24. If Christ were omnipresent with respect to His human nature, they who are to enter into His glory after death, would not need to change their abode, but might be glorified here upon earth.

3. But with respect to His Godhead, Majesty, Grace and Spirit, He is at no time absent from us.

a) His majesty, *i. e.*, His power and glory, He reveals in us that we may know Him, love Him above all things, and that we may not esteem the world and its glory, but overcome the world and the devil, and do all things through Him alone, who strengtheneth us. 1 John 5 : 4 ; 2 : 14, Phil. 4 : 13.

b) By His grace He bears us up continually, and assures our hearts of His love, although we yet sin daily. John 14 : 23.

c) With His spirit He works powerfully in us, preserves us in living communion with Himself, and comforts us at all times. John 14 : 18, Matt. 18 : 20, Gal. 4 : 6, 2 Cor. 3 : 18.

4. Thus the two natures in Christ are not separated, even as they were not separated during His earthly life, since by His ascension He only changed the abode of His human nature, exchanged earth for heaven. Of His divine nature what God said (1 Kings 8 : 27) is true, and of His human nature what is recorded in Acts 3 : 21.

5. In this doctrine the Reformed Church is in entire accord with the Church of the first centuries, while the

doctrine of the ubiquity of Christ's human nature is new and has no foundation in Scripture. We shall here cite the testimonies of the Church father Augustine (Bishop of Hippo, died 430).

a) With respect to His Majesty, Providence, inexpressible grace, what is said of Him is fulfilled: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." With respect to the flesh which the Word, the Son of God, assumed, *i. e.*, with respect to that which was born of the Virgin Mary, was arrested by the Jews, nailed to the cross, taken down from the cross, wrapped in linen, laid into the grave, appeared in the resurrection, ye will not always have Him with you. Why? Because with respect to His bodily presence, after communing with the narrower and wider circle of disciples for forty days, He ascended into heaven, whither they followed Him with their eyes, but not bodily, and is not here. He is yonder, because He is seated at the right hand of God; and He is here, because with respect to His Majesty, He is at no time absent from us. Or, with respect to the presence of His Majesty (*i. e.*, His Godhead), Christ will always be present with us; of the presence of the human nature (*i. e.*, His humanity), what He said to His disciples holds true: "But me ye have not always." For with respect to His bodily presence, He remained with the Church but few days, but now He is present to faith, but not to sight. (Augustinus, Tract 50 in Joh.).

b) Do not doubt that the man Christ Jesus is now in the place whence He will come; and remember and hold fast the confession, that He is risen from the dead, ascended into heaven and sitteth at the right hand of the Father, and will come from none other place to judge the quick and the dead, and in accordance with the word of the angel, Acts 1: 11, shall so come in like manner, as He was seen going into heaven, *i. e.*, in the

substance and form of the flesh, to which indeed He gave immortality, but the nature of which he did not thereby take away. With respect to His human form, it must not be imagined that He has been effused everywhere. For we must be on our guard, that we do not conceive of the Divinity of His person in such a manner as to destroy the reality of His humanity. For it does not follow that that which is in God is like Him, everywhere present. For the Scriptures also say of us, that in Him we live, move and have our being, and yet we are not like God everywhere present. But the man Christ Jesus is in God differently, since God (the God-head) is in the man (Christ) in an especial and peculiar manner. For both God and man constitute one person, and both one Christ Jesus, who is everwhere present with respect to His divinity, but in heaven with respect to His humanity. This is the confession of the Christian Church, according to the simple understanding of the article of the Christian faith (Augustinus ad *Dardanum*, Epist. 57).

Question 49.

Of What advantage to us is Christ's ascension into heaven?

First, that he is our advocate in the presence of his Father in heaven; secondly, that we have our flesh in heaven, as a sure pledge that he, as the head, will also take up to himself, us, his members; thirdly, that he sends us his Spirit, as an earnest, by whose power we "seek the things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, and not things on earth."

I. Christ our Intercessor in Heaven.

1. Christ represents us in the presence of the Father, for He presents in behalf of those who believe, who are ingrafted into Him and constitute with Him one body, the righteousness which He has wrought out for them, and with which their sins are covered in the sight of God. Heb. 9: 24, Rom. 8: 34, 1 John 2: 1.

2. Because of His intercession, which is founded upon His sacrifice, our prayers offered in His name are heard by the Father. Heb. 7 : 25, John 14 : 13.

3. Olevianus. "Because Christ through His own blood entered the sanctuary, which is not made with hands, into heaven itself, it is a certain assurance, or thereby the world is powerfully convinced, that through Christ has been accomplished eternal righteousness, as Daniel (9 : 24) prophesied. So that it is not only evidence of our righteousness that Christ once entered into the holy of holies, but also the fact that He abides there and appears before the Father continually in our name, is a continuous accomplishment or advancement of our righteousness; because by virtue of His only sacrifice, with which He blotted out our sins in His body through eternity, He appears righteous continually before the face of God. Heb. 9 : 24."

II. Christ's Flesh our Pledge in Heaven.

1. Christ is exalted to heaven in our flesh, *i. e.*, with His human nature, which He received from us, and which He still shares with us in His glorification. As our surety, who had offered Himself to the Father for His chosen ones already before the foundation of the world, He entered into heaven and glory, as He had entered into suffering and death. Jer. 30 : 21. In this we have the assurance that not only our soul, but also our glorified body will hereafter participate in eternal salvation. This assurance is further strengthened in that we stand in indissoluble life communion (head and members) with Him. "Does a head leave its member, does it not draw it after itself?" John 12 : 32 ; 14 : 3, Eph. 2 : 6, Phil. 3 : 20.

2. Olevianus. "By His ascension Christ took possession of the heavenly inheritance in behalf of all His brethren (in the name of all His brethren, *i. e.*, His

believing ones), so that we now have Christ's flesh, which is our flesh, as a sure pledge that He, as the Head, will also take up to Himself us, His members, as He promised. John 14: 2, 3; 17: 24."

III. Christ's Spirit as an Earnest Upon Earth.

1. As Christ's flesh, our human nature, in heaven is an assurance of our eternal salvation in Christ, so is also Christ's spirit upon earth, the Holy Ghost in our hearts, the pledge of our salvation. Through the testimony of the Holy Ghost (Rom. 8: 16, 17) we become conscious that we are children of God and heirs of eternal life, joint heirs with Jesus Christ, who has already received the inheritance for us and has entered upon it. Acts 2: 33, 2 Cor. 1: 21, 22, Eph. 1: 13. Through the Holy Ghost our life is hid with Christ in God; but when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory. Col. 3: 3, 4. Of this the Holy Ghost assures us as an earnest. "They are pilgrims upon earth and live in heaven." Ps. 39: 12: "For I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were."

2. The gift of the Holy Ghost, the spirit of the exalted Christ is not only an earnest of assurance, but is also to admonish and incite us that by His power we may become heavenly minded. Col. 3: 1, 2, Matt. 6: 21. "Fit your heart for the place where you would be eternally."

3. Olevianus. "On the other hand Christ sent down another earnest (over against the earnest of our flesh in heaven) which He received not from us (as His flesh), but from the Father, *viz.*, the Holy Ghost, that He should dwell in our body and soul, and should be an indissoluble bond between the head which is in heaven, and us His members who are upon earth, and should assure us of the eternal inheritance in heaven."

Question 50.

Why is it added, "and sitteth at the right hand of God?"

Because Christ is ascended into heaven for this end, that he might there appear as head of his church, by whom the Father governs all things.

I. The Signification of His Sitting at The Right Hand of God.

1. Ursinus. "The sitting at the right hand of God is to be distinguished from His ascension into heaven. The one cannot take place without the other, they are, therefore, not the same. The article of the sitting at the right hand of God is distinguished from the preceding one in a threefold manner : 1. In it is set forth the object of the ascension ; for Christ ascended into heaven that He might be seated at the right hand of God. 2. Christ sitteth continually at the right hand of God ; but only once did He ascend into heaven. 3. The angels also ascend into heaven, and we shall also ascend into heaven ; but neither they nor we shall sit at the right hand of the Father. Heb. 1 : 13, ' But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool ? ' How much less did He say this to any man, except to Christ."

2. The sitting at the right hand of another has from ancient times been a mark of honor. Even to-day one whom we would honor is seated at our right hand.

a) It is the highest mark of honor if a king should invite any one to sit on his right hand. When Bathsheba came to Solomon after his ascension to the throne, he advanced toward her, and when he seated himself upon the throne, his mother was seated at his right hand. 1 Kings 2 : 19. The mother of Zebedee's children made the request of the Lord : " Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left in thy kingdom." Matt. 20 : 21.

b) The prophets of the Old and the New Testament

beheld in their visions God sitting upon a throne in heaven. 1 Kings 22 : 19, Isa. 6 : 1, Rev. 7 : 10.

c) The right, *i. e.*, the right hand, is in ordinary life preferred to the left, because we accomplish the most with it, and it is, therefore, stronger than the left. It is the right hand of the king in which he holds the sceptre.

Ursinus. "When we speak of the right hand of God, we derive the conception from human relations, as the Scriptures also speak of other bodily members with reference to God. The expression includes a two-fold significance: 1. The highest power and strength, or the omnipotence of God. Ps. 118 : 16, Ex. 15 : 6. 2. The highest dignity and honor, or the majesty of God. The latter is here intended."

d) The sitting at the right hand of God was promised to Christ. Ps. 110 : 1. Christ Himself foretold it. Matt. 26 : 64. The apostles attest it. Mark 16 : 19. Acts 2 : 34-36, "For David is not ascended into the heavens : but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." Ps. 110 : 1, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

Stephen beheld Christ at the right hand of God. Acts 7 : 55.

3. Sitting at the right hand also signifies rest after labor. The sitting of Christ at the right hand of God after the work of redemption, corresponds to the rest of God the Father after the work of creation.

4. The ascension of Christ was His accession to the throne, the sitting at the right hand of God indicates His reign.

5. Olevianus. "We believe thus that Christ not

only ascended into heaven in His human nature, in order that He might live there, as the angels, in eternal happiness, but that He might sit down in heaven at the right hand of God, *i. e.*, manifest Himself at the throne of God as the King of the holy angels and of saints, and as the head of the Christian Church, through whom the Father governs all things, which dignity surpasses by far the dignity of all angels and other creatures. Heb. 1: 13, Ps. 110: 1."

II. What is Embraced in Christ's Reign.

A. Christ manifests Himself in the first place as the Head of His Church.

1. He governs the Church which is His body, as by the head the human members are governed through the understanding and the will. Col. 1: 18, Eph. 1: 22, 23.

2. Olevianus. "On this account the exaltation of Christ in His kingdom is His induction to the highest honor, so that the Christ who before was crowned with thorns now appears openly in heaven before the angels and the saints in the most glorious light as King of the Christian Church, and as the Head of all angels and of the redeemed, that He might from thence work more powerfully in all His members than He did when He was bodily on earth; and that He might prepare them for salvation and further them daily by the service of the Church, according to the order which He had prescribed in His Word and by the power of His spirit, with which He rules in His Church and dwells in it."

3. The Pope of Rome maintains that he is the "visible head of the Church," the "representative of God" and the "vicar of Jesus Christ upon earth. He makes his appeal to the words of Christ to Peter: "And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall

not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven : and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." Matt. 16 : 18, 19. Since it is claimed that Peter was afterward bishop of Rome, they also claim that this promise passed over to his successors, the Popes of Rome.

To this we reply : 1. The personal promise given to Peter for his good confession was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, when the communion of Jesus Christ, the Christian Church, was first established upon the sermon of the man of rock, and there were added to it about three thousand souls. Acts 2 : 41. 2. The power of the keys was given by the Lord after His resurrection to the other disciples, as well as to Peter, so that he was in this respect in no way superior to them. John 20 : 22, 23. 3. That Peter was bishop of Rome, cannot at all be proved, but it is a tradition that arose subsequently. 4. Even if Peter had been actually invested with the bishop's office in Rome (an office which did not belong to the Apostolate), the bishops at Rome would have only been successors of Peter as bishop, but not of his apostolic dignity, and the personal distinction connected with it. 5. The Church is not in need either of a visible head, because the invisible Head (Matt. 28 : 20) promised to her His continual presence, neither can a sinful man administer the highest authority of God as His representative upon earth. Christ Himself, before His departure to the Father, indicated His representative upon earth, which does not exclude His immediate operation, but includes it. The Holy Ghost is alone the "representative of God" and vicar of Christ upon earth. John 14 : 16 ; 16 : 14.

B. Through Christ as the head of the Christian Church the Father governs all things.

1. At the right hand of God Christ also superintends the government and judgment of the world. Matt. 28 : 18, Heb. 1 : 3 ; 2 : 7, 8, Eph. 1 : 20, 21, John 5 : 22.

2. The talk that is heard from unbelievers is very silly : “ If Christ governs the world, then God the Father is superannuated (put on a stipend).” John 10 : 30 : “ I and my Father are one.” This word of Christ holds true in His humiliation, as well as in His exaltation. He had subjected Himself to the Father, and yet they were and remained one. God was in Christ and reconciled the world unto Himself. 2 Cor. 5 : 19. The Father has now exalted Him at His right hand and hath given Him all power in heaven and upon earth, and they remain one ; since the Son of God governs all things, God the Father also governs the world through Him.

Question 51.

What profit is this glory of Christ, our head, unto us ?

First, that by his Holy Spirit he poureth out heavenly graces upon us, his members ; and then, that by his power he defends and preserves us against all his enemies.

I. Heavenly Gifts.

1. Although Christ is invisible to our eyes, there exists between Him and believers, who are His members, the most intimate communion which is mediated by the Holy Ghost, who dwells in Christ and in us. The Holy Ghost is the royal gift of grace, which He had promised to send after His departure to the Father in glory, that by His gifts and powers here already the glorification of the members of His kingdom might be begun. Acts 2 : 33, Eph. 4 : 8.

2. The gifts of the Holy Ghost are of two kinds :

a) Extraordinary,—for extraordinary purposes and times, such as prophesying, speaking with tongues (in foreign languages not previously learned), and work-

ing miracles. These gifts were largely bestowed in the times of the Apostles, and will doubtless be restored again at the end of the world. In the intervening years they are not entirely withdrawn, but are only seldom manifest. Mark 16: 17, 18. The fulfillment of the promise of working miracles, we may find recorded in Acts 16: 18; 2: 4, 11; 10: 46; 28: 5, 8, 1 Cor. 12: 4-11.

b) Ordinary,—which are necessary to the salvation of every believer, *e. g.*, knowledge, faith, love, hope, etc., Gal. 5: 22.

3. Olevianus. “The first benefit is that for the sake of Christ, and for His sake only, the Father bestows the Holy Spirit upon the elect, governs and quickens them by the preaching of the gospel through the power of the Holy Ghost, and not only adorns the entire Church with diverse gifts, but also bestows upon each member as many gifts as may be necessary to the honor and glory of the Head, to the edification of the whole body and to the happiness and salvation of its members, and to the extent to which the King Himself desires to work in each member, for His own honor and for the edification of the other members, as He says, John 15: 16, ‘Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit.’ Therefore each member bringeth forth as much fruit as is desired by Him who has ordained the same. But no member is left without the gifts necessary to his salvation, and none remain so fruitless as not to serve to some extent the honor of God and the welfare of the body of Christ.”

II. Heavenly Protection.

1. Enemies on every hand, within and without, is the lot of every one upon earth who believes heartily on the Lord Jesus and confesses Him in word and deed. Luke 21: 17.

2. But we have a powerful Head in heaven who protects and preserves His members upon earth :

a) Against our own flesh. Rom. 6 : 14.

b) Against the world. John 16 : 33.

c) Against satan. Rom. 16 : 20.

d) Against death. 1 Cor. 15 : 26.

3. As powerless as are these enemies against the Head who is in heaven, so little they prevail against His members on earth. 1 Peter 1 : 5, John 10 : 28.

4. Olevianus. "The second benefit is the protection of the Church against all enemies, against sin, the flesh, the world, tyrants, unclean spirits, the secret and open instruments of these, all of whom the heavenly Father calls enemies of Christ, and with reference to whom He manifests by daily examples His power to overthrow them. In a word, we are members of the King, members, I say, of His own body, with far more certainty than the hand is a member of the body. All the hindrances which meet us in the whole world are brought into subjection to this King, that they cannot injure us ; yea, that even the thoughts and counsels of all kings, princes and lords have their beginning, their fulfillment or failure in His will, and He so controls them that they must be subservient to His own glory and to the salvation of those who believe on Him. Eph. 1 : 21-23. Therefore nothing from man or devil can befall believers without the will of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is seated in heaven at the right hand of the Father."

5. This truth is illustrated in the life of Frederick the Pious of the Palatinate, the father of the Heidelberg Catechism. Scarcely had the catechism been introduced into the Palatinate, when enmity arose on all sides against the Elector, especially on the part of his Lutheran co-electors and their theologians. He was accused before Emperor and Empire, and it was

their intention, with the help of the Catholic princes, to declare his sovereignty forfeited. They even spoke of it that it might cost him his head. To his brother Richard, who gave him the information, Frederick wrote at that time: "I rely upon my dear and faithful Father in heaven in confident hope that His omnipotence will use me as an instrument to confess His name openly in the holy Empire of the German nation in these last times, not only with my mouth, but also by my acts. I also know that He has sufficient power to preserve me, a poor, simple (unlearned) man, and that He will preserve me through the power of the Holy Ghost, even should it come to this, that it would cost my life; for which, should it please my God and Father in heaven to use me for such honor, I should never be able to thank Him sufficiently, neither here on earth nor in eternity." When he was called upon by the Catholic Emperor at the Diet, which convened soon after this declaration was made, in 1566, again to rid his land of his catechism and of other Reformed institutions, he declared before the entire assembly: "with reference to matters of religion, which I am called upon to change and to set aside, I announce that in the sphere of faith and conscience I know but one Lord, who is the Lord of lords and King of kings; and therefore I say that this question does not pertain to 'a cap full of flesh' (*i. e.*, his head), but to the soul and its salvation, which has been committed to me by my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and which I am in duty bound and prepared to preserve for Him. Therefore I cannot concede to your Imperial Majesty the right of authority over it, a right which belongs to God alone, who is its Creator. As far as my catechism is concerned, I am committed to it. It is fortified in the margin by proof-texts from the Holy Scriptures to such an extent that it may stand immoveable, and it is

my hope that by the help of God it may continue so to stand. As for the rest, I comfort myself with the thought that my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has given me, together with all who believe on Him, the assured promise that everything which I shall lose for the sake of His honor or name, shall be restored to me in the world beyond a hundred-fold. With this I most humbly commend myself to the grace of your Imperial Majesty." Rightly did Boquinus say later in his funeral sermon for the Elector: "If martyrdom consists in the righteousness of the cause, the temper of soul and joyous resignation to suffering, then we may count this splendid Elector among the martyrs of Christ." Although the Emperor, after the Elector had departed from the Diet, declared that "the pest must be destroyed," yet no one dared to lift a hand against the courageous confessor. The Lord at the right hand of the Father in heaven, who had given to him the heavenly gifts of faith and of courage to bear testimony, extended also His hand over him, "to protect and preserve him by His power against all enemies."

Question 52.

What comfort is it to thee, that "Christ shall come again to judge the quick and the dead!"

That in all my sorrows and persecutions, with uplifted head, I look for the very same person who before offered himself, for my sake, to the tribunal of God, and hath removed all curse from me, to come as judge from heaven; who shall cast all his and my enemies into everlasting condemnation, but shall translate me, with all his chosen ones, to himself into heavenly joys and glory.

I. The Final Judgment and the Judge.

1. By His ascension Christ manifested Himself in heaven as the Head of the Church and Lord over all. As such He will manifest Himself on earth in His second coming, visibly before the eyes of the whole world,

of those who are yet alive, and of those who have died and will be raised again.

2. Christ will come again as judge of the living and the dead. Acts 10 : 42.

a) He will come from heaven. Matt. 26 : 64, Acts 1 : 11.

b) He will come in His glorified body, visibly and in glory. Matt. 25 : 31, 1 Thess. 4 : 16, John 19 : 37.

3. Christ will sit in judgment :

a) Over all men, the quick and the dead. John 5 : 22, Acts 17 : 31, Matt. 25 : 32, Rev. 20 : 12, 13.

b) He will judge : 1. Their thoughts. 1 Cor. 4 : 5. 2. Their words. Matt. 12 : 36. 3. Their works. 2 Cor. 5 : 16.

c) The principle of the judgment. 1. The heathen will be judged according to the law in their hearts, *i. e.*, their conscience. Rom. 2 : 12, 15. 2. The Jews according to the law of Moses. Luke 16 : 29, Rom. 2 : 12. 3. Nominal Christians will be judged by the gospel, which they heard, but did not accept. John 3 : 36 ; 12 : 48.

d) The judgment will be strict, and no secret sin will remain hidden from the Judge. Rev. 20 : 12. Even the sins of youth will be remembered, if not followed by repentance and forgiveness. Eccles. 12 : 1. Therefore David prays, Ps. 25 : 7 : "Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions."

e) The judgment will be entirely just and impartial. 1 Peter 1 : 17, Rev. 6 : 15-17, Luke 23 : 30, Acts 17 : 31.

4. Types of the judgment of the world are : 1. The Flood, Gen. 6—7 ; 2. The drowning of the Egyptians in the Red Sea, Ex. 14 ; 3. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Gen. 19 ; 4. The destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70 A. D., Matt. 24, Luke 21.

II. The Expectation of the Judgment on the Part of Believers.

1. The day of the final judgment awakens feelings of terror, and so also the expectation of the same, so much the more because no one knows when it will come. Joel 2 : 11, Heb. 10 : 27, Matt. 24 : 36.

2. The unbelieving world, however, does not experience these terrors. Gen. 19 : 14, Matt. 24 : 38, 39.

3. For believers the expectation of the judgment is associated not with dread, but with comfort.

a) For the judge is the very same Christ who before offered Himself, for their sakes, to the tribunal of God, who bore their sins and thereby freed them from the curse and the punishment of sin, so that they have the forgiveness of all their sins, and are no more judged and condemned. John 5 : 24 ; 3 : 18.

b) In this world they suffer many sorrows and persecutions. Acts 14 : 22, 2 Tim. 3 : 12. In such sorrow and persecution the prospect of Christ's return to judgment affords them comfort. For it will bring to an end all their adversities. Therefore they await this day with uplifted head, *i. e.*, with joyful confidence. Luke 21 : 28.

4. From the children of God the day of judgment and of complete redemption is hidden, even as it was hidden from the Son of God in the days of His flesh, Mark 13 : 32 ; and with the flight of the centuries it seems as if God were delaying the fulfillment of the promise. 2 Peter 3 : 9.

Therefore the Lord admonishes His own. Matt. 25 : 13, "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh." The waiting must at the same time be a watching. "To look for" implies more than to wait. It implies preparation, so to live in faith as to be ready at any hour to meet the coming of the Judge with joy, though He

should appear suddenly. Matt. 24 : 44, 1 John 2 : 28 ; 4 : 17. See the warning and admonition recorded, Matt. 24 : 40-51.

5. Even though the day and the hour of the second coming of Christ be hidden from us, there are signs of its approach to which we are to give heed. Matt. 16 : 3 ; 24 : 3.

a) Matt. 24 : 14, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations (though it may not secure the conversion of all nations and of all their individual members), and then shall the end come."

b) 2 Thess. 2 : 3, "For that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition" (the antichrist). 2 Peter 3 : 3, "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers walking after their own lusts . . ."

c) Matt. 24 : 21, 22, "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved : but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

d) Matt. 24 : 29, 30, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken : and then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man (His visible manifestation) in heaven (*i. e.*, in the clouds of heaven or in the sky)."

III. The Redemption of Believers in the Judgment.

1. The sorrows and tribulations which befall the children of God upon earth, proceed from the enmity of the world against Christ. For Christ's sake they are

subjected to hatred and hostility, while they themselves seek to obey the injunction of the apostle, Rom. 12: 18, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."

2. The enemies of Christ are not merely those who openly by word and deed reject and blaspheme Him, but also those who, notwithstanding their knowledge of the gospel, persist in their carnal-mindedness, which, according to Rom. 8: 7, is enmity against God; and likewise those who have tasted the good word of God, but fall away, and crucify to themselves anew the Son of God. Heb. 6: 6. These "His enemies," Christ at His return will cast into eternal condemnation. Matt. 25: 41, 2 Thess. 1: 8-10, John 19: 37, Rev. 20: 10.

3. All these enemies of Christ are also the enemies of the Christian, who in truth bears the name of Christ, confesses Him, and for the sake of whose name He is hated. John 15: 18-21, 1 Peter 4: 4-5.

"All his and my enemies" are thus one and the same persons. Other enemies a child of God cannot have if he lives according to the word and spirit of his heavenly Father. Matt. 5: 38-48, Rom. 12: 17-21, Matt. 5: 22-24.

4. The comfort which is found in the judgment of Christ over "all his and my enemies," does not indeed consist in a carnal, malignant joy over their condemnation, but in the sure prospect that believers are thereby delivered, *i. e.*, set free forever from their oppressors and persecutors. Luke 21: 28, 2 Thes. 1: 6.

IV. The Glorification After the Judgment.

Not only shall the children of God be glorified, but also the whole creation.

A. THE BODILY GLORIFICATION OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD.

1. The redemption of the elect is brought to its completion with the return of Christ, because then also the body will be restored and united with the soul, so that

the whole man in body and soul will participate in the joy of eternity. The elect are those whom God, in accordance with His eternal counsel and will, endowed with true faith, and whom He preserves unto eternal life. The lost receive in the judgment what they deserved, on account of their sins, but the elect receive, as a gracious gift, eternal life. Rom. 6 : 23, John 14 : 3.

2. At the return of Christ, His own, who have died, will arise first, and afterward those yet alive will be glorified together with them. 1 Thess. 4 : 16-18, 1 Cor. 15 : 53.

3. True believers, according to the promise, will not come into judgment, *i. e.*, will not be judged and condemned. But yet they will appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, in order that the works which they have wrought in God, even as the works of the wicked, may be made manifest, not for their own, but for the glorification of Christ, their Head, and that the gracious reward, which the righteous judge will give them, may be openly awarded, as will be done with the punishment merited by the wicked. 2 Cor. 5 : 10, Matt. 25 : 34, 2 Tim. 4 : 8.

4. The three parables, Matt. 25, do not treat of the judgment of the whole world, but of the separation between true and nominal believers. Christ will judge, *i. e.*, will separate those who bear His name only outwardly from those who are truly ingrafted into Him and are anointed by His spirit, *i. e.*, His elect.

a) In the parable of the ten virgins, Matt. 25 : 1-13, the difference brought out is between dead and living faith. They all had lamps, outer vessels, but only the five wise had oil, the Holy Ghost. While tarrying for the bridegroom, "they all slept." But when the bridegroom came, only the wise who had received the oil, the anointing of the Holy Ghost, and had a living faith, were able to meet him and go in with him to the

marriage ; the foolish had only lamps without oil, faith without power.

b) In the parable of the talents, Matt. 25 : 14–30, the ground of separation is fidelity and unfaithfulness in life. According to the measure of the gift of grace and fidelity in work the gracious reward is bestowed ; those who despised grace, although they are counted among the “servants” of the Lord upon earth, are rejected.

c) In the parable of the sheep and the goats, Matt. 25 : 31–46, the separation is made on the basis of the sincerity of loving service, which receives even the humblest member of Christ into favor without reckoning upon reward. The selfish, who have no regard for the Lord in the person of His humble members, are rejected.

5. The elect or true believers also experience, if not in their person, yet in their work for the kingdom of God, something of judgment. They stand and build upon the one foundation, which is Christ Jesus ; but the day of Christ’s return will manifest what will stand the test and what will not. 1 Cor. 3 : 10–15.

6. Olevianus. “The article of the second coming of Christ serves as a further confirmation of our faith. Since Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven, and exercises His royal prerogative and judgment,—first, to protect His own, while at the same time He keeps them under the cross and under manifold oppressions of the enemy, in order that the sin remaining in them may be subdued ; secondly, to overcome and to punish the wicked, while at the same time He allows much to go unpunished in this life, to prove to them His patience and long-suffering. That we may not become weary under the sorrows and crosses under which Christ keeps us in this life for our own highest good, in order that sin may be destroyed within

us, and that we may not fear too much the forwardness and insolence of the wicked, it is His will that we should lift up our hearts and our heads, and await the blessed advent of Him who will not always suffer the wicked to do violence to His faithful children, but when they least expect it will take vengeance upon them and completely deliver His own and wipe away all tears from their eyes. Isa. 35 : 10, 1 Peter 3 : 13-15."

B. THE RENEWAL OF THE CREATION.

1. Through sin there has come not only over man, but over the entire material creation, curse and ruin. Gen. 3 : 17.

2. As man, so also the creation, groans under the curse and longs for redemption. Rom. 8 : 19-22.

3. With the second coming of Christ the entire creation will also be renewed. 2 Peter 3 : 10, 13.

After all this we can see that the second coming of Christ is not a source of terror, but of comfort, to the elect. "He which testifieth these things saith, surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Rev. 22 : 20.

OF GOD THE HOLY GHOST.

Question 53

What dost thou believe concerning the Holy Ghost ?

First, that he is true and co-eternal God with the Father and the Son ; secondly, that he is also given me to make me, by a true faith, a partaker of Christ and all his benefits, that he may comfort me, and abide with me forever.

I. The Being and the Person of the Holy Ghost.

1. Ursinus. "The Holy Ghost is the third person of the true and only God, proceeding from the Father and the Son, co-eternal in Being and attributes with

the Father and the Son, who is sent forth by both of them into the hearts of the elect, to sanctify them unto eternal life. 1 Cor. 2: 11, 12; 12: 11, John 3: 8.

2. The Holy Ghost is not a mere energy or attribute of God, still less a disposition in the individual man or the apprehension of divine things as it prevails at one time or another among Christians (the so-called "Spirit of the Church"); but He is in the one and only divine Being a Person like the Father and the Son, and is called holy, because being of the divine essence and different from the human spirit, he is holy and maketh holy.*

3. The Holy Spirit is called the "Comforter," Paraclete, of the same import as *Advocatus*, *i. e.*, the one summoned to help, the Helper. Christ speaks for us in heaven as our intercessor (intercession), the Holy Ghost speaks to us in our hearts as the comforter (consolation, *i. e.*, comfort). The personality of the Holy Ghost appears clearly from the following:

a) He is spoken of in the Scriptures with the Father and the Son, and after the same manner. Matt. 28: 19, 2 Cor. 13: 14.

b) In the creation He is distinguished from the Father (who speaks) and from the Son (the Word). Gen. 1: 2. So also at the baptism of Christ, when the Holy Ghost appeared in visible form. Matt. 3: 16.

c) The Holy Ghost is self-active; He comes, Luke 1: 35; He abides, John 14: 17; He testifies, John 15: 26; He reproves, John 16: 8; He teaches and brings to remembrance, John 14: 26; He prays for us, Rom. 8: 26, 1 Cor. 12: 11, "But all these work-

* The two adjectives derived from the word "Geist" (Spirit), "geistig" (psychical) and "geistlich" (spiritual) are frequently interchanged. "Geistig" has reference to everything that pertains to the human spirit, and "geistlich" to that which pertains to the Spirit of God and the divine sphere.

eth that one and the self-same spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."

d) The Holy Ghost is the only true representative of Jesus Christ upon earth since His ascension. Christ promised Him as the "other" Comforter, *i. e.*, the Helper in the place of Him who has been exalted to heaven and is to His people an invisible Savior. John 14: 16; 16: 13, 14. The Holy Ghost spake to the disciples and gave them commands. Acts 8: 29; 10: 19; 11: 12; 13: 2; 16: 7.

4. When the Holy Ghost is spoken of as the third Person in the one divine essence, there is no distinction of rank implied, but He is so called because He proceeds from the Father and the Son. He is of the same rank as the Father and the Son. John 16: 13-15. The coming of the Father and the Son into the hearts of believers and abiding there (John 14: 23) takes place through the Holy Ghost. The Divinity of the Holy Ghost, equal with the Father and the Son, is indicated by:

a) The divine names which are given Him. Acts 5: 3, 4, 2 Peter 1: 21, 2 Tim. 3: 16.

b) The divine attributes which He possesses. 1 Cor. 2: 10; 3: 16, Isa. 40: 13, Rom. 11: 33, 34.

c) The divine works which He performs. Ps. 33: 6, Job 33: 4, Acts 20: 28, 1 Cor. 12: 11.

d) The divine honors which are ascribed to Him. Matt. 12: 32, 1 Peter 4: 14.

5. The Holy Ghost is co-eternal with the Father and the Son, but His relation to the world is different in both the economies of God, the old and the new, through which He prepares and brings salvation to His own. In the old covenant He was active chiefly as the Spirit of the revelation of the Will of God (in the law), and of the future redemption (in the prophecies and promises). By the law He wrought repent-

ance unto life, and by the promises He sealed the Sonship of the believing covenant people. But the free manifestation of His power is announced as in the future. Isa. 32 : 15 ; 44 : 3, Ezek. 36 : 27, Joel 3 : 1. In this sense are to be understood the words recorded in John 7 : 39, "For the Holy Ghost was not given ; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." After the resurrection and ascension of Jesus, the Holy Ghost was "poured out" (manifested His full power) as the Spirit of sanctification in the new covenant. Acts 2 : 16, Joel 1 : 1, Acts 1 : 4, 5 ; 2 : 33.

6. The Holy Ghost is designated differently, according to His activities. He is called :

- a) The Spirit of Sonship. Rom. 8 : 15.
- b) A pledge and seal. Eph. 1 : 13, 14.
- c) The Comforter, *i. e.*, the Helper. John 14 : 26.
- d) The Spirit of Truth. John 14 : 17.
- e) The Spirit of anointing. 1 John 2 : 20.
- f) The Spirit of grace and of prayer. Zech. 12 : 10, Rom. 8 : 15, 26.
- g) The Spirit of glory. 1 Peter 4 : 14.

Olevianus. "In the first part (of the articles of the creed) we are taught of God the Father and the Creation ; how out of pure love toward us, whom He adopted as His children, He created all things and upholds them. In the second part we are taught how the Son was sent into the world by the Father, how He became man, how He accomplished upon earth what was necessary for our salvation, and now appears for us in heaven until He shall return to judgment. But in order that the love of God the Father and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ may be impressed upon our hearts, the Father gives us, through the Son, the Holy Ghost, who makes us partakers of the mercy of the Father and of the grace of Jesus Christ."

II. The Office and the Activities of the Holy Ghost.

1. After the Son of God had purchased and prepared for us redemption through His blood, the Holy Ghost imparts the same to us and makes us partakers thereof, makes us whole and holy. His activity is the work of sanctification. 1 Cor. 6 : 11.

The Reformed Church prefers to speak of the impartation rather than of the appropriation of salvation, because sanctification is in reality not the work of man, but of God the Holy Ghost. Phil. 2 : 13. The exhortation of the Apostle (Heb. 12 : 14) has reference to our exercise in sanctification, *i. e.*, in godliness. 1 Tim. 4 : 7.

2. Just as Christ (Question 31), so also the Holy Ghost exercises a three-fold office: 1. Of reproof. 2. Of instruction. 3. Of comfort. John 16 : 7-13.

a) The Holy Ghost reproves, *i. e.*, (literally) convinces the world, the natural man, of sin ("because they believe not on me," which since the revelation of God in Christ is the greatest sin), of righteousness (*viz.*, that before God no other righteousness avails except that which Christ has purchased by His death and ascension to the glory of the Father), and of judgment (by which He judges the world, and from which only he will be freed who believes on Him who has overcome the prince of this world). By His reproofs the Holy Ghost works repentance and conversion.

b) He teaches believers, in that He opens to them the knowledge and understanding of divine truth, and furthers them therein from one stage to another. John 16 : 12, 13.

c) He comforts them, in that He is sensibly near to them in place of the invisible Savior, who is exalted in heaven and supports them in all things. John 16 : 6, 7.

3. Ursinus. "The office of the Holy Ghost is that

of sanctification, which is directly effected through Him by the Father and the Son, on account of which He is called the spirit of sanctification. The most important parts of this office are: instruction, regeneration, union with Christ and God, guidance, comfort and perseverance."

4. The Holy Ghost works in part directly,—He can awaken the longing for redemption in the heart of a man (*e. g.*, a heathen) who is far from the covenants of promise and without the knowledge of revelation (*e. g.*, the jailer at Philippi with his question, "What must I do to be saved?"); in part mediately,—through the appointed means of grace, the Word and the sacraments. Rom. 10: 17.

It is our privilege and duty to pray for the Holy Ghost. Luke 11: 13. This also we cannot do of ourselves. It must be incited in the heart and sustained before the Father in heaven by Him. Rom. 8: 26.

5. The relation of the Holy Ghost to the soul of man is an entirely personal one. It is necessary that He be "also given me." Only there where He has entered the heart can He fulfill His office. Gal. 4: 6.

6. The Holy Ghost works in the heart "True Faith," whereby He makes us partakers of Christ, so that Christ becomes our own. Rom. 8: 9.

7. By the Holy Ghost we are also made partakers in Christ of all His benefits, *i. e.*, the forgiveness of sins, righteousness and eternal life. The steps by which this is ordinarily accomplished, and which we call the "order of salvation," are the following:

a) The call. We distinguish: 1. A general call, *i. e.*, in so far as the Word is proclaimed to all men. Acts 17: 30, Matt. 24: 14; and 2. An energetic or effectual call, which proves itself in the case of the elect. Matt. 20: 16, John 6: 37, 44, 2 Thess. 2: 13, 14, 2 Tim. 1: 9, 10.

b) Illumination, by which the Holy Ghost works in the hearts of sinners the proper self-knowledge (of sin) and the proper knowledge of God (of salvation). Eph. 1 : 17, 18.

c) Faith, *i. e.*, the power wrought by the Holy Ghost in the heart of the sinner, by which he lays hold of and appropriates the benefits of Christ offered him. 1 Cor. 12 : 3, 2 Thess. 3 : 2, Eph. 2 : 8.

d) Justification and sanctification. By the faith wrought by the Holy Ghost in accordance with God's grace, the sinner becomes a partaker of the forgiveness of sins, of righteousness and holiness before God, in which the beginning of the new life, regeneration, consists. Rom. 5 : 1 ; 1 : 17, 1 Peter 1 : 1, 2, Gal. 5 : 22, 24.

e) The sealing. The Holy Ghost comforts me and abides with me forever, *i. e.*, He assures me of divine sonship, defends me against all the power of satan, and preserves me unto eternal salvation and glory, so that I am enabled to persevere in faith. Rom. 8 : 14, 16 ; 8 : 28, 30, Eph. 4 : 30.

8. The elect child of God is assured of his salvation by the Holy Ghost. When Olevianus was about to die, his colleague advanced toward him and said : "Dear Brother ! You are without doubt certain of your salvation in Christ, just as you have taught others ?" The dying man laid his hand upon his heart and said : "Certissimus !" *i. e.*, "most certain !" This was Olevianus' last word.

9. Olevianus. "To sum up all, the Holy Ghost is the only bond by which Christ dwells in us and we in Him, and as the branch is ingrafted into the vine and receives strength and life from the vine, so we are ingrafted into Christ through the Holy Ghost, that we may have true fellowship with Him and receive from Him eternal life."

How do we know that we have the Holy Ghost ?

From its effects. For as the wind is not seen by us, but its effects are felt, so also the Holy Ghost is known through the effects He produces, of which the most important are: First, believing prayer and childlike trust in our heavenly Father, Rom. 8: 15, 26; secondly, hatred of sin and love for righteousness. The struggle against sin is a certain indication that the Holy Ghost dwells in man. For flesh and blood has not revealed to us that we ought to resist sin, because it is the nature of flesh and blood to continue in all sin. God works this disposition in us by the Holy Ghost, as St. Paul teaches. Rom. 7: 5. Therefore the struggle against the remaining sins still clinging to us, and which distress us, should not discourage us. It should rather serve as a source of comfort, and give us courage against the sins which bring sorrow after sorrow upon us, since this struggle in us is a certain indication that we have the Holy Ghost. If we have the Holy Ghost, we are members of Christ, whose perfect righteousness, which He purchased for us by His death, clothes and covers in the sight of God the remaining temptations and sins with which we struggle, so that God will not regard nor remember them forever. If it be that we continue in this spiritual contest in true faith, the victory will not fail us, as the Apostle teaches in Rom. 7: 19, 20, 24, 25, etc., a comfort which he concludes with these words, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," *i. e.*, those who in their lives resist the sins of the flesh through the Spirit of God. Thirdly, further effects wrought by the Holy Ghost are confession of Christ and of His truth, that He may be honored; also thanksgiving and hope of the help of the Lord. These are certain indications that the Spirit of God dwells in a man's heart. Rom. 10: 9, 10, 1 Cor. 12: 3, Eph. 5: 18-21. Finally that

hope is a work of the Holy Ghost, from which each one may conclude that he is a child of God and of eternal salvation, and has also the child-like spirit and the pledge of salvation, may be inferred from the beautiful promises found in Ps. 2 : 12 and Rom. 5 : 1-5.

Question 54

What believest thou concerning the "Holy Catholic Church" of Christ ?

That the Son of God, from the beginning to the end of the world, gathers, defends, and preserves to himself, by his Spirit and word, out of the whole human race, a church chosen to everlasting life, agreeing in true faith ; and that I am, and for ever shall remain, a living member thereof.

It is to be observed that in the Creed it is not said "I believe on (or in) a holy universal Christian Church," as it is said I believe on (or in) God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost. "I believe one holy universal Christian Church," which means, I believe that there is a Christian Church, and of it I believe that it is holy and universal. The same meaning underlies the statement of the remaining articles in the third part of the Creed. "I believe in" involves the personal revelation of man to God, of person to person ; "I believe one," etc.= "I believe that," etc., indicates that one is persuaded of a matter, *i. e.*, has confidence in the same. The Holy Ghost is the Person. In the Church is the special sphere of His activity. The communion of saints, forgiveness of sins, resurrection of the body and eternal life are the blessings which He communicates in the Church. I believe in the Holy Ghost, and in Him I am certain of the blessings which I expect.

I. Of the Name and Nature of the Christian Church.

1. "Church" signified originally the "House of the Lord," and refers to the place where a Christian con-

gregation assemblies; in a wider sense it stands for the congregation itself and for a number of churches collectively. In the widest sense it stands for the whole body of Christian churches or the congregation of the Lord. ("Gemeine" is the earlier, "Gemeinde" the present form in the German language; the former is still used for the body of churches, the latter for single congregations.)

2. The Christian Church derives its name from Christ, and is the "Church chosen to everlasting life." The election of God is the ground upon which membership rests, and eternal life is its end. A note in the official edition of the Heidelberg Catechism of 1619 says: "The word 'chosen' indicates the difference between the outer, visible Church, in which the pious and the wicked are mingled together, and the invisible Church of Christ, to which belong, properly speaking, only those who are chosen, who truly believe and are godly in their lives." To such only the answer of the Catechism is applicable. Eph. 1: 4, 10, John 10: 27, 28.

3. The Christian Church is spoken of as "one," because its members, "agreeing in true faith" and in spirit, are so closely bound together that they constitute one body. Eph. 4: 3-6. The unity of true faith in Christendom finds its expression in the Catholic or so-called Apostles' Creed, which is common to all Christian Churches.

4. The Church is called "holy," because it is sanctified by the blood and spirit of Christ, *i. e.*, for the sake of Christ's merits it is looked upon by God as perfectly holy and righteous, and is so renewed by the Holy Ghost that its members strive diligently after a holy life and character, and thus God separates it from the world for Himself. 1 Cor. 3: 17, Ps. 93: 5.

5. The Church is called "Catholic," because it is gathered "out of the whole human race," and is not

limited by any people or country, neither by time, place nor condition, race nor age. Mark 16: 15, Rev. 5: 9, 1 Cor. 1: 2, Gal. 3: 28.

a) The discord which arose in the human family after the flood, through new and common sins (Gen. 11: 1-9), the dispersion of the nations and the enmity which followed it, have been removed for all true children of God upon earth by the outpouring of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost. Acts 2: 1-11, 17, 21.

3. The name "Catholic" is not to be understood as if the Christian religion was to be the so-called "world religion," and as if all individuals were to be embraced by it. Compare Luke 12: 32, Matt. 7: 14, Luke 18: 8, Matt. 24: 14 (a witness unto all nations).

6. Other names of the Church than that of a "Church chosen," etc., are: The kingdom of God or of Christ, the kingdom of heaven (compare the parables in Matt. 13), the body of Christ (Eph. 4: 11, 12), God's house (1 Tim. 3: 15, 1 Pet. 2: 5), Temple (1 Cor. 3: 17, 2 Thess. 2: 4), city and Zion (Heb. 12: 22), fellow citizens and of the household of God (Eph. 2: 19, 22), the flock (Acts 20: 28, 1 Peter 5: 2, 3), the bride (John 3: 29, Rev. 21: 9).

7. The Augsburg Confession, Art. 7. "The holy Christian Church is the congregation of saints (the assembly of all believers), in which the Gospel is purely preached, and the sacraments rightly administered according to the Gospel."

8. Calvin. The Church is the "assembly of saints and the mother of believers. Wherever the Word of God is purely preached and the sacraments are administered according to the institution of Christ, there is without any doubt a Church of God. The Catholic Church consists of a multitude of people, gathered out of all nations who are scattered abroad, and yet agree in their doctrinal views and are united by the bond of

a common worship. It embraces all separate Churches organized in city and village, according to man's need, so that each one rightly claims the name and character of a Church."

II. Christ is the Only Head of the Church.

1. Christ is the only foundation upon which the Church stands. 1 Cor. 3 : 11. He is the only Lord to whom the Church belongs. Acts 20 : 28. (Compare Rev. 5 : 9.) He is the only Head that governs the Church. Eph. 1 : 22, 23 ; 4 : 15, 1 Peter 2 : 9, Tit. 2 : 13.

2. The activity of Christ in the Church and for it is two-fold :

a) He "gathers" and unites the chosen members of the Church in His communion. Jer. 31 : 3, Eph. 4 : 11, 12. To the gathering activity of Christ belongs especially the work of missions ; and even if the command of the Lord recorded in Matt. 28 : 19 referred primarily to the Apostles, yet the Church has entered upon its heritage, both by the preaching of the Gospel in the congregation and by its proclamation among Jews and Gentiles. Isa. 49 : 6. The Apostles were sent forth directly by the Lord (Matt. 28 and Acts 9) ; but the work which we call "missions" was undertaken under the influence of the Holy Ghost by the congregation, and from Antioch, where the Christian name first arose, were sent forth the first messengers to proclaim the Gospel among Jews and Gentiles. Acts 13.

b) He "defends and preserves" the Church against all the enmity of the world and all the powers of darkness. Ps. 110 : 2, Matt. 16 : 18 (compare Acts 2 : 14, 41), Matt. 28 : 20.

3. The means by which Christ effects this work are "His Spirit and Word." The Spirit stands first, for by Him the Word is given, and without Him the Word

cannot accomplish anything. At Pentecost the outpouring of the Spirit preceded the proclamation of the Word.

a) By His Spirit. John 6 : 63, Acts 16 : 14.

b) By His Word. 2 Thess. 2 : 14, Rom. 15 : 18-20, Ps. 68 : 11.

4. This work is carried forward by Christ "from the beginning to the end of the world." The building and the gathering of the kingdom of Christ in the world began immediately after the entrance of sin into the world, with the first promise in Paradise, Gen. 3 : 15; is continued in the Old Covenant, 1 Peter 1 : 10, 11, Heb. 11, especially verses 39 and 40; and is completed in the New Covenant, Acts 2 : 42. What is recorded in Isa. 59 : 21, is true of the kingdom of Christ, both in the old and in the new covenant. "As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; my Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever."

III. Of the Members of the Church.

1. The Church is one body (organism); Christ is the Head, Christians are the members. Eph. 4 : 15, 16, 1 Cor. 12 : 27.

2. There are different classes of members of the Church: dead, hypocritical, and true or "living."

a) Dead members are those who are indifferent to revealed truth, or who believe only intellectually. Jas. 2 : 17, Rev. 3 : 1.

b) Hypocritical members are those who carry the name of Christ in their mouths and know how to speak of "knowledge" and "experience," but have not broken earnestly with sin. Matt. 7 : 21, 2 Tim. 3 : 5. Calvin :

“Among the members of the visible Church there are many hypocrites who have nothing of Christ, except the name and appearance. There are some who are ambitious, covetous, envious, slanderous, some of impure walk, who are endured for a time, either because they cannot yet be convicted by an ordinary judicial process, or because Church discipline has not always been administered with the necessary firmness.”

c) The true or “living” members are the chosen ones, holy and beloved of God, who have true and living faith in their hearts and bring forth fruit in their lives. Gal. 5 : 6, Col. 3 : 12–14.

3. The visible Church is to be distinguished from the invisible.

A. The visible Church. To it belong all who have been baptized into the name of the Triune God, and who have not publicly renounced the Church or have not been excommunicated by it. The visible Church or “Christendom” is divided into various larger or smaller communions. The larger are known as “Churches,” the smaller as “sects.”

1. The following are Churches: The Roman Catholic, which has as its head the Pope, whose seat is in Rome. The Greek-Catholic, whose head is in part the patriarch of Constantinople and in part the Emperor of Russia. The Lutheran, which is named after Luther. The Reformed, which retained the name that was originally borne by all the Churches of the Reformation, and which in its fuller title is known as “The Reformed Church according to the Word of God.” We neither call ourselves Zwinglians nor Calvinists. 1 Cor. 1 : 12, 13. “Reformed” means restored, renewed, viz., according to the Word of God; and he only is truly Reformed who not only accepts the doctrines of the Reformed Church as the knowledge of the truth which is after godliness (Tit. 1 : 1), but who is also

renewed in the spirit of his mind, Eph. 4: 23. The Lutheran and the Reformed Church stand upon the ground of the Gospel, and, therefore, bear also the common name "Evangelical," in the Union (in Germany) as well as outside of it. They are to maintain peace with each other after the manner of Abraham's word to Lot, "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren." Gen. 13: 8. In common they are to defend the honor of their King Jesus. "We as those of one race stand also for one man" (Zinsendorf). In common they are to oppose the enemies of the Gospel. "Divided on the march, united in attack" (Moltke), but not upon each other. They are also called "Protestants," which name they received at the Diet of Speyer in the year 1529, when they, the Lutheran and the Reformed states of the German kingdom, in common protested, *i. e.*, entered a protest against the violence done to the Gospel by the worldly power. True Protestants, are, therefore, those who protest in behalf of, but not against, the Gospel. The Protestants justly claim for themselves that they restored the Apostolic Church, and the question of the Catholic opponent, "Where, then, was your Church before the Reformation?" may be dispatched with comfort by a counter question, "Where was your face this morning before you had washed yourself?" The Reformed Church numbers about sixty million members.

2. The above named Churches also stand for confessions, differentiated by their doctrines and institutions. 1 Cor. 3: 12. The marks of the true Church are: 1. That the pure and unadulterated Word of God be preached. 2. That the Sacraments be rightly administered according to the institution of the Lord, and 3. That Christian discipline (Church discipline) be rightly

exercised. Matt. 28 : 19, "Go ye therefore, and teach (1) all nations, baptizing (2) them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe (3) all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

3. The chief confessions of the Reformed Church are: The Heidelberg Catechism (1563), the Catechism of Geneva (Calvin's, 1541), The Scotch (1560), The Gallican (1561), The Belgic (1562), The *Anglican (1562), the Second Helvetic (1566), and the Canons of Dort (1619).

4. Besides the "Churches" there are a number of so-called sects (communities which have separated from the Churches), of which the Methodists and Baptists are the most numerous, both of which sprung from the Reformed Church.

B. The invisible Church is included in the visible. To it belong all true and living members (see above 2, *c*), those who are still sojourning on earth, as well as those who are already at home with the Lord. Gal. 4 : 26, Rev. 21 : 2.

4. There is a distinction made between the Church militant and the Church triumphant. The Church militant is the one which in this world fights against the flesh, the world and the devil under the banner of Christ. Eph. 6 : 10-12. The Church triumphant is the one which already rejoices in heaven with the holy angels, and which will celebrate a complete triumph after the resurrection. Rev. 7 : 9-17.

5. A three-fold distinction may also be made after the type of the temple in the Old Testament: *a*) In the outer court are those who are still unconverted, *b*) in the holy place, the regenerate, who still walk by

* The Anglican or Episcopal Church of England belongs to the Reformed Churches so far as its confession is concerned.

faith, and c) in the holy of holies, the perfect, who in heaven do behold the face of God.

6. The principal question is: "What is your relation to the church and what comfort do you derive from the fact that there is a church chosen unto everlasting life?" I believe "that I am, and forever shall remain, a living member thereof." That I am and forever shall remain a living member thereof, does not rest upon my will and strength, but upon the free grace, and the faithfulness of God in Christ Jesus. Eph. 2 : 8-10, 20-22, 1 Cor. 1 : 8, 9, John 10 : 28, Ps. 23, 6.

7. That one is of the elect of God and a living member of the church is evidenced: By his faith (Mark 16 : 16) ; by a holy life (2 Tim. 2 : 19) ; and by the inward testimony of the Holy Ghost (Rom. 8 : 16). Living members of the church also must struggle all their life-time upon earth against sin, and may fall into grievous errors (as did David and Peter) ; but the Lord always awakens them again to repentance and strengthens their faith that they may persevere. Luke 22 : 32, Matt. 24 : 24.

8. Of the perseverance of the saints, *i. e.*, of believers. Question 53 closes with the statement in reference to the Holy Ghost that He is given me that He "may abide with me forever." Question 54 closes with this statement with reference to the church: "that I am, and forever shall remain a living member thereof." In the former statement is expressed the one side of the doctrine of the perseverance of believers, *viz.*, the preservation by the Holy Ghost, who never forsakes entirely or forever the elect, and in the second statement the other side is brought out, *viz.*, the consequent confirmation and assurance of salvation. The doctrine of the Reformed Church with reference to election (the term Election is found in Rom. 11 : 5) is not

treated in a separate question either in the Heidelberg Catechism or in the Catechism of Geneva (Calvin's), since both Catechisms were prepared primarily as hand-books of instruction for youths, and their authors accommodated themselves to this end through a wise consideration of the Apostle's distinction of milk for children and strong meat for them that are of full age. Heb. 5 : 13, 14. But that election is a fundamental doctrine of the Heidelberg Catechism cannot be doubted, as a large number of questions (1, 8, 20, 26, 28, 52, 53, 54 and 65) could otherwise not be understood at all in the sense of the authors, as given in their own writings. Ursinus, in his commentary on the catechism, treats this doctrine very thoroughly in connection with Question 54, which defines the "chosen" Church, and in this the expounders of the catechism have followed him for three hundred years. Olevianus with his last word, "certissimus," avowed the same doctrine in the face of death.

With reference to the doctrine of election (*i. e.*, God's free choice in the election and the sovereignty of grace) the Reformers were agreed with the exception of Lasco and of Melancthon in his later years. Their brotherly relation to Calvin, however, was not disturbed thereby, and this should serve as an example to us. God hath called us to peace. 1 Cor. 7 : 15.

Question 55

What dost thou understand by "the communion of saints?"

First, that all and every one who believes, being members of Christ, are in common partakers of him, and of all his riches and gifts ; secondly, that every one must know it to be his duty, readily and cheerfully to employ his gifts for the advantage and salvation of other members.

By the "communion of saints" is not meant the church itself, of which the former article treated, but it is intended to set forth the relation of the living

members of the Church to Christ their Head on the one hand, to their living fellow-members on the other. As members they have a right to all that Christ has secured for them by His incarnation; as fellow-members they owe certain duties to all who like themselves are redeemed by the blood of Christ and are ingrafted into Him by a true faith. The relation to Christ the Head (Eph. 5 : 23) and to their fellow-members may be compared to the community of goods which exists between man and wife in the marital union.

By "saints" are not meant the mere external members of the Church, neither those who are canonized or regarded as saints by the papacy, nor those who pretend that they are pious and despise others (Luke 18 : 9), but true "believers" who in Christ are separated from the world and are regenerated by the Spirit of God. Such are spoken of by the Scriptures in many places as "saints" (*e. g.*, Col. 3 : 12, Eph. 1 : 1 ; 6 : 18, Phil. 1 : 1).

I. The Communion with Christ and His Gifts—a Comfort to us.

1. Believers are "members" of Christ. Eph. 5 : 30. They are thereby also "members," *i. e.*, united with each other. 1 John 1 : 3.

2. "All and every one who believes," *i. e.*, all together and each one in particular. The possession and enjoyment of the gifts of grace as well as the obligation of mutual love belongs to all in general and to each one in particular. Every one who believes, even the one who has only the beginnings of faith, enjoys the fullest measure of privilege in Christ fully. Every believer, whether he possesses little or much, is indebted to the other members according to the measure of his ability.

3. The communion with Christ, *i. e.*, the personal relation of faith to Him is the ground upon which

we have a claim and share in His riches and gifts. Col. 2: 19, Rom. 8: 32.

a) Christ's riches, *i. e.*, everything that is Christ's own, belongs also to those who believe on Him. 1 Cor. 3: 22. His Father (John 20: 17), His love, (John 17: 23-26), His name (Rev. 3: 12), His merits (Rom. 4: 24), His inheritance, heaven and His glory (Rom. 8: 17, John 12: 26; 17: 24), are ours.

b) Christ's gifts are: Forgiveness of sins, righteousness and eternal life. Eph. 1: 3, John 1: 16.

4. It is a great comfort to us poor sinners that our Lord is so rich, and that we participate in all His gifts. 2 Cor. 8: 9. But of the right that we have to Christ and His riches, grows the duty of more and more complete consecration to Him in body and soul. 1 Cor. 3: 23, 2 Tim. 2: 11, 12.

II. The Communion with all Believers—an Admonition for us.

1. "Every one must know it to be his duty," *i. e.*, know that he is under obligations to other members, and is to act in accordance therewith. Gal. 3: 28, 1 Cor. 12: 26.

2. "Gifts" includes all that we have, and this reminds us that we do not possess anything of ourselves, but that everything is given to us of God. 1 Cor. 4: 7.

3. The gifts include both the temporal and spiritual.

a) Temporal. Rom. 12: 1, 3, Isa. 58: 7, Matt. 25: 35, 36.

b) Spiritual. 1 Thes. 5: 11, 1 John 5: 16.

4. Every one is to "employ his gifts, for the advantage and salvation of other members." What God has given to each one, both temporally and spiritually, He has given not merely for each one's own possession and enjoyment, but also for the use and service of his brother. This condition is fulfilled when each one faithfully discharges his duty, and in addition con-

tributes to the needs of others according to his ability. 2 Cor. 8: 2, 3, 4, 14.

5. This is to be done "readily and cheerfully," *i. e.*,

a) Not from constraint. 2 Cor. 9: 7.

b) Not from impure motives, as did the Pharisees, who on that account had their reward. Matt. 6: 3.

c) But from love, which is the bond of brotherly fellowship. Col. 3: 14, Gal. 6: 10.

6. With reference to the duty we owe to all believers, we need to be constantly admonished, since by nature we are so deeply immersed in selfishness, which is overcome with so much difficulty. Phil. 2: 4.

Examples. The first Christian Church in Jerusalem. Acts 2: 44, 45; 4: 32-37. It was not social democracy, but Christian socialism. a) Every one was free to sell his goods, or to retain the money which he received for them. Acts 5: 4; b) Provision was made for the poorer members of the Church according to their necessities. Acts 2: 45. The difference between a Christian and a social democrat may be thus briefly expressed: The Christian says, "What is mine, is yours;" the social democrat says, "What is yours, is mine." The alms of the apostolic churches which the Apostle Paul gathered. Acts 11: 29, Rom. 15: 26. The community of goods of the first Christians, of whom the heathen said: "Behold, how they love one another!"

Question 56.

What believest thou concerning "the forgiveness of sins?"

That God, for the sake of Christ's satisfaction, will no more remember my sins, neither my corrupt nature, against which I have to struggle all my life long, but will graciously impute to me the righteousness of Christ, that I may never be condemned before the tribunal of God.

The following three articles (concerning the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life

everlasting) treat of the benefits of Christ which we receive as living members of the Church.

I. The Ground of Forgiveness.

1. No person can forgive his own or another person's sins. Neither can the Church and its servants. They can only announce to those who believe, and assure them of the forgiveness of their sins. God alone can forgive sins. In this the scribes (Mark 2: 7) were correct; but the Son of man, as the Son of God, has also power to forgive sins. Mark 2: 10, Isa. 43: 25.

2. All sins, even those against men, are committed against God, because they are transgressions of His law. Ps. 51: 4.

3. The ground upon which God forgives sins is the "satisfaction of Christ." To believers under the old covenant it was the approaching, to believers under the new covenant it is the accomplished sacrifice of Christ upon the cross that atones for their sins. Rom. 3: 25, 1 Peter 2: 24, Eph. 1: 7.

II. The Measure of Forgiveness.

1. "All sins," great and small, without exception, are remitted to believers. The sin against the Holy Ghost (Matt. 12: 31) can not be committed by true believers, the elect, because the Holy Ghost lives and governs in them. 1 John 1: 7, Rom. 8: 1, Ps. 103.

2. God forgives believers not merely all actual sins, but also "the corrupt nature, against which I have to struggle all my life long." The "corrupt nature" is the evil desire which still clings even to believers, as long as they live in this mortal body, and disinclines them (Heb. 12: 1) to fulfill the will of God in all respects. This is also sinful. Paul does not speak of his former condition, but of his then present regenerated state, when he laments, Rom. 7: 23-25: "But I see another law in my members, warring against the

law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O, wretched man that I am ! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Gal. 5 : 17, Ps. 103 : 3.

III. The Nature of Forgiveness.

1. To forgive sins does not mean to undo a sinful deed, which is not possible. God forgives sins in the sense that He "no more (in time and eternity) remembers" them, *i. e.*, He will not visit or punish them. Jer. 31 : 34, Isa. 38 : 17, Micha 7 : 19.

2. God not only forgives my sins, but "He will graciously impute to me the righteousness of Christ." When by His act of forgiveness He removes from us the filthy garments of sin, we would stand before Him in nakedness and shame. He, therefore, graciously covers our nakedness with the garment of Christ's righteousness. Rom. 3 : 24, Isa. 61 : 10.

3. When God forgives sins they are forever "forgiven and forgotten." The temporal and bodily consequences of sin God either removes or allows to remain. In the latter case they are not to be looked upon as punishments for sin, but as evils which are intended to humble and to warn us.

IV. The Benefits of Forgiveness.

1. Because God will not only not remember my sins anymore, but will impute to me the righteousness of Christ, it follows that the forgiveness is complete and secures this benefit "that I may never be condemned before the tribunal of God." The reference here is to the final judgment which will bring condemnation upon the sinner on account of his sins. But sin having been fully forgiven, there is no more sin at hand to be condemned in the believer at the day of judgment. John 5 : 24, Rom. 8 : 33, 34.

2. To “believe” the forgiveness of sins means not merely to have a knowledge of all that is involved therein, but also to seek earnestly for forgiveness and to accept it with a repentant and believing heart. Ps. 51 : 1 ; 32 : 5.

Question 57.

What comfort doth “the resurrection of the body” afford thee?

That not only my soul, after this life, shall be immediately taken up to Christ, its head, but also that this my body, being raised by the power of Christ, shall be reunited with my soul, and made like unto the glorious body of Christ.

I. The Condition After Death.

1. Man consists of body and soul which in life are most intimately united with each other. Death is the separation of soul and body. Gen. 35 : 18, 1 Kings 19 : 4.

2. The soul, the divine breath of life, is immortal. It continues, therefore, to exist even after the separation from the body. But the body, when with the departure of the soul it becomes lifeless, decays and again returns to dust, from which it was taken at creation. Gen. 2 : 7, Eccles. 12 : 7, Matt. 10 : 28.

3. That the soul remains alive after death appears from the fact that the body only is spoken of as participating in the resurrection.

4. The separation of body and soul after death is really an incomplete state, because the two belong together. 2 Cor. 5 : 4. But the disembodied state of the soul of the child of God after death is rendered complete by its being “taken up to Christ, its head,” and thereby becoming free from all the weakness, want and suffering which are connected with life in “the body of this death,” and participating in the salvation of Christ. Of His glory it will partake only at the resurrection of the body. Rev. 14 : 13, Phil. 1 : 23, 2 Cor. 5 : 8.

5. "Immediately," *i. e.*, as soon as death takes place. There is no intermediate state, as is taught by the Greek Church, or purgatory, as the Roman Church teaches. According to the latter, the souls even of believers are to be purified in some such place from many sins, and are to do penance for many things which they neglected to do. By indulgences, which the living also can secure for the dead, the time in purgatory for the latter is to be shortened. Of such a purgatory scripture knows nothing. Luke 23: 43. Neither do believers stand in need of such a purification after death, since they are in the enjoyment of complete forgiveness. 1 John 1: 7.

6. A first separation between those who are justified by the blood of Christ, and the wicked, takes place at death. Luke 16: 22, 23, Acts 1: 25, Heb. 9: 27.

For the dying prayers may be offered, but not for the dead.

II. The Resurrection of the Body at the End of the World.

1. An "immortality of the soul" is accepted even by most heathen of all ages. But the resurrection of the body is a truth revealed by God to His people, which was already believed by the patriarchs under the old covenant, and was clearly set forth by Christ. Ps. 16: 9, John 11: 25. That the resurrection of the dead was accepted under the old covenant, according to the stage of revelation which they enjoyed, Christ declared when He said to the Sadducees, Matt. 22: 29, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God," and, verses 31-33, "have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God?"

2. "This my body," *i. e.*, this body in which I now dwell and which will return to dust; not another, foreign to me. Job 19: 25, 27, 1 Cor. 15: 54.

3. All objections of the natural reason against the

resurrection of the flesh, *i. e.*, of the body, are answered by the words of Christ to the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection of the dead. Matt. 22 : 29. The resurrection is no more a natural process, than was the creation of man, but like it, one of the miracles of divine omnipotence. Besides, this death does not affect a complete annihilation of the body, but only a dissolution of its parts, which may be mingled with other matter, but do not escape God's hand, *i. e.*, do not pass beyond the sphere of His almighty and omnipresent power. The same almighty power which created the first man out of the dust of the earth, is also able to restore the decomposed human body. Luke 1 : 37.

4. Examples from nature: 1. The butterfly, whose body is the same as that which the caterpillar bore, from which it sprung, and yet is different; 2. The seed of corn, which perishes in the earth, and yet from whose material springs up the stalk, which, in contrast with the unsightly grain, is both beautiful and noble. From this is drawn the illustration recorded in 1 Cor. 15 : 42-44. (Verses 36, 37 of the grain of wheat.)

5. The body is "raised." This biblical expression also points to the fact that the body in its material particles is yet at hand, and that no foreign body is substituted in the resurrection, just as a man awakes from sleep with the same body with which he went to sleep. The Scriptures also speak of those who have died in Christ as asleep. 1 Thess. 4 : 13, 14. To be "raised" means to arise, not to begin anew.

6. The resurrection is the work of the Triune God. Of the Father and of the Holy Ghost. Rom. 8 : 11. In a special sense, however, it is the work of the Son, because the resurrection of the body constitutes the completion of His redemptive work. John 6 : 39. My body is therefore raised "by the power of Christ."

7. The resurrection by the power of Christ is actually

pledged to us : *a*) By Christ's own resurrection from the dead ; *b*) By His raising the dead—the daughter of Jairus (Matt. 9), the youth at Nain (Luke 7), Lazarus at Bethany (John 11).

8. My restored body “shall be reunited with my soul,” and thereby the complete man is restored for the enjoyment of salvation and glory. Ezek. 37 : 5, 6. This prophecy is primarily a picture of the restoration of captive and dispersed Israel. It may also be regarded as a picture of the human body held captive in death and dissolved as to its elements. In reality the latter is the presupposition of the vision of the prophet.

9. The resurrection body will be “made like unto the glorious body of Christ,” *i. e.*, the body with which Christ arose and ascended into heaven. It was the same body which was laid into the grave and which the disciples again recognized, but it was transfigured, glorified. Phil. 3 : 21, 1 Cor. 15 : 42–44, 49.

10. The glorified body will be a spiritual body (1 Cor. 15 : 44–46), and therefore : *a*) Without desires, Matt. 22 : 30 ; *b*) Without wants, such as food, drink and sleep, 1 Cor. 6 : 13 ; *c*) Without limitations, as Jesus appeared with His resurrection body through closed doors among the disciples, John 20 : 19, 26 ; *d*) White and glistening, Matt. 17 : 2, the glorified form of Jesus ; *e*) fitted to behold the presence of God, 1 Cor. 13 : 12, 1 John 3 : 2 ; *f*) incorruptible, *i. e.*, never aging and wasting away, immortal, 1 Cor. 15 : 53, Luke 20 : 36.

11. The order in which the resurrection will take place is (1 Cor. 15 : 23–26) as follows : 1. The children of God which are asleep are raised, and they who are yet alive are changed. 2. After that the end, when Christ will also raise the wicked, whose bodily resurrection is only a transition to eternal death, *i. e.*, to condemnation and to anguish of body and soul. John 5 :

28, 29, 1 Cor. 15 : 51, 1 Thess. 4 : 16, 17, Rev. 20 : 4-6, 12.

12. The ground upon which we believe in the resurrection of the just and of the unjust is :

1. The omnipotence of God, Rev. 21 : 5 ; 2. The righteousness of God, Acts 17 : 31 ; 3. The truthfulness of God, Dan. 12 : 2.

13. The aim and purpose of the resurrection of the body is the honor and glory of God. Prov. 16 : 4, 1 Cor. 15 : 28.

14. What comfort dost thou then derive from the resurrection of the body ? That in this life I endure all things patiently both in body and soul and long for the redemption of my body. Rom. 8 : 18, 23.

15. When the pious queen consort of the great Elector Frederick William of Brandenburg, Louisa Henrietta (both ornaments of the Reformed Church) was placed in deepest sorrow through the death of her first born son, the hereditary prince (1649), she composed the noblest resurrection hymn contained in the treasury of song of the entire Evangelical church :

Jesus, my Redeemer, lives,
And His life I soon shall see ;
Bright the hope this promise gives ;
Where He is, I too shall be.
Shall I fear Him ? Can the head
Rise and leave the members dead ?

Close to Him my soul is bound,
In the bonds of hope enclasped ;
Faith's strong hand this hold hath found,
And the Rock hath firmly grasped.
Death shall ne'er my soul remove
From her refuge in Thy love.

I shall see Him with these eyes,
Him whom I shall surely know,
Not another shall I rise ;
With His love my heart shall glow ;
Only there shall disappear
Weakness in and round me here.

Ye who suffer, sigh and moan,
Fresh and glorious there shall reign ;
Earthly here the seed is sown,
Heavenly it shall rise again ;
Natural here the death we die,
Spiritual our life on high.

Body, be thou of good cheer,
In thy Saviour's care rejoice ;
Give not place to gloom and fear,
Dead, thou yet shalt know His voice,
When the final trump is heard,
And the deaf, cold grave is stirred.

Laugh to scorn then death and hell,
Fear no more the gloomy grave ;
Caught into the air to dwell
With the Lord who comes to save,
We shall trample on our foes,
Mortal weakness, fear and woes.

Only see ye that your heart
Rise betimes from earthly lust ;
Would ye there with Him have part,
Here obey your Lord and trust.
Fix your hearts above the skies,
Whither ye yourselves would rise.

Question 58.

What comfort takest thou from the article of "life everlasting?"

That since I now feel in my heart the beginning of eternal joy, after this life I shall inherit perfect salvation, which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man" to conceive; and that, to praise God therein forever.

Eternal life in the children of God is unfolded in two stages: Here on earth the beginning and foretaste, yonder in eternity the completion and fullness of happiness.

I. The Beginning of Eternal Joy.

1. The life of believers is in its widest sense eternal, inasmuch as it has its origin in the eternal merciful counsel of God and continues unto eternity. The

answer of the catechism, however, is formed from the standpoint of the temporal realization of God's gracious counsel and according to it eternal life takes its beginning in regeneration. 1 Peter 1 : 3, John 3 : 36, 1 John 3 : 2.

2. Here therefore we "feel" in our hearts only the beginning or a foretaste of "eternal joy." This feeling consists principally in the peace of God. John 14 : 27, Rom. 5 : 1.

At times the Lord favors His own with special feelings of eternal joy, as He did the Apostle Paul. 2 Cor. 12 : 2-4. He was caught up into Paradise and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

3. Eteral joy can not be complete here, because we are still in conflict with temptation, and subject to sin and all manner of afflictions and besetments inseparable from the bodily life. 1 Cor. 15 : 19, Rom. 8 : 24.

II. Perfect Salvation.

A. The nature of perfect salvation.

1. "After this life we shall inherit perfect salvation." Only then will it be our undisturbed possession. Matt. 25 : 34, 36. They shall go into eternal life. 1 Cor. 13 : 10, 1 Peter 1 : 7, 8.

2. Salvation after this life is incomprehensible to us now; neither can it be described. In this life no eye hath seen it, nor ear heard it, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive. It will be a perfect salvation.

a) In respect to its constitution. For it consists : 1. In complete deliverance from all evil of body and soul. Rev. 21 : 4. 2. In the complete enjoyment of all good. Rev. 21 : 3.

b) In respect to its effect which will be the complete renewal, 1. Of the soul,—understanding (knowledge), 1

Cor. 13 : 12 ; feeling, Ps. 16 : 11 ; will, Ps. 110 : 3.
 2. Of the body, which in its members will be fully fitted for the service of God. Rev. 22 : 3.

c) In respect to its permanence. It is eternal. Isa. 35 : 10.

3. Salvation will be the same for all believers ; but the glory different. Matt. 20 : 9, 10, 1 Cor. 15 : 41.

4. But will not eternal salvation be tedious ? By no means ; for “ eternal joy ” will neither weary nor satiate. Gazing into the mysteries of the works and the ways and the Kingdom of God, as well as blessed intercourse with the countless hosts of the children of God, will afford the richest diversity of occupation ; and the rest of the children of God will not consist in inactivity.

For *B.* The purpose of salvation is the eternal adoration of God. The highest and noblest activity for a person renewed after the image of God. Rev. 7 : 9, 10, 15.

III. The Comforting Certainty.

1. The article concerning eternal life is a “ comfort ” only to me when I am certain of this life. The evidences of it are : *a)* Living faith, 1 John 5 : 10, 11 ; *b)* A holy life, 1 John 3 : 3 ; *c)* Heartfelt longing, Ps. 42 : 2.

Question 59.

But what doth it profit thee now that thou believest all this ?

That I am righteous in Christ, before God, and an heir of eternal life.

Having explained the articles of the creed, with Question 59, the thought of Question 22 is again taken up. Question 21 explains the nature of true faith. Question 22 sets forth the contents or object of that faith, of which we have a full exposition in Questions 25–58. And now Questions 59 and 60 treat of the benefit, of the fruit or effect of true faith.

I. Justification Before God.

1. "Before God," not before one's self; for no one can be his own judge. Neither before men who have no power to pass judgment either unto salvation or condemnation. God alone is the true judge since He alone is righteous, holy and omniscient. James 4: 12.

2. "In Christ" only then would we be righteous in and of ourselves if we had fulfilled the law of God perfectly in our entire life. 1 John 3: 7, "He that doeth righteousness, *i. e.*, fulfills all the demands of the law, is righteous." Such is not our condition. But if we are ingrafted into Christ by faith and have appropriated His benefits, especially redemption through His blood, by faith, then His righteousness is also our righteousness. Phil. 3: 9.

3. To be "righteous" before God or to be justified does not mean that my sinful life and nature have been entirely taken away from me, and that I am now wholly pure and sinless in all my thoughts, words and acts, but that I who am a sinner, am fully freed and absolved by God the judge from all sin and its consequences. Rom. 4: 8; 8: 37.

II. The Inheritance of Eternal Life.

1. When a criminal who has been sentenced to death is pardoned, his right to life is restored to him. Thus there flows from the first benefit of faith, which is justification, a second, that I, a pardoned sinner, am reinstated into the right to life which was lost through sin and am become "an heir of eternal life."

2. "In Christ." This relation holds with reference to the second benefit of faith as well as the first. Being ingrafted into Christ by faith, I become a partaker of His life as well as of His righteousness. John 6: 40, Rom. 8: 17, Tit. 3: 7.

Question 60.

How art thou righteous before God?

Only by a true faith in Jesus Christ; so that, though my conscience accuse me that I have grossly transgressed all the commands of God, and kept none of them, and am still inclined to all evil; notwithstanding God, without any merit of mine, but only of mere grace, grants and imputes to me the perfect satisfaction, righteousness and holiness of Christ; even so, as if I never had had, nor committed any sin; yea, as if I had fully accomplished all that obedience which Christ hath accomplished for me; inasmuch as I embrace such benefit with a believing heart.

I. The Manner of Justification.

Justification is a judicial act of God in relation to the believing and repentant sinner. ("Only by a true faith.") It may be illustrated by the method of procedure in an action at court.

1. The judge is God the Father. Ps. 50: 6, Isa. 1: 18.

2. The accused is the sinner. "Thou art the man!" 2 Sam. 12: 7.

3. The accuser is our own "conscience" (Rom. 2: 15, "their thoughts the meanwhile accusing") when it is awakened by the law. John 5: 45.

4. The accusation is this: "that I have grossly transgressed all the commands of God, and kept none of them, and am still inclined to all evil." Rom. 3: 23, James 2: 10.

"Still inclined to all evil" has reference to the old man, *i. e.*, the corrupt, sinful kind and nature which clings to all men, even the regenerate, from Adam. Rom. 7: 14, 21-23.

(In this passage "law" is equivalent to impulse, incitement; the one tends toward the good, in virtue of the inward, *i. e.*, the new, regenerate man or the renewed mind; the other tends toward evil, by reason of sin, *i. e.*,

the sinful nature of the old man, which is still active even in the regenerate in this life.)

5. The witnesses which rise up against sin are the broken commandments of God and our own thoughts, words and deeds.

6. At the trial the accused sinner can neither justify nor excuse himself. Job 9: 3. He can only say with the publican: "God be merciful to me a sinner." Luke 18: 13.

7. According to the righteous judgment of God it would be necessary to condemn the sinner to eternal death; for "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." Ezek. 18: 20. But the surety appears, Christ the Son of God, with His "perfect satisfaction, righteousness and holiness."

(A "surety" is one who goes security for the debt of another, so that when the other cannot pay the debt he pays it.)

"The satisfaction of Christ" is His entire redemptive work by which He has paid as our surety the debt we owe and has satisfied the demands of God the Father, in that He has kept the law of God perfectly and has borne the punishment for our transgressions, and thereby made full satisfaction. Rom. 5: 19, 2 Cor. 5: 14.

His "righteousness and holiness" were manifested in that, having entered into our sinful flesh, He yet preserved Himself unspotted from sin and fulfilled all righteousness. John 8: 46, 1 Peter 2: 22-24, Phil. 2: 8, John 17: 19.

The satisfaction of Christ is "perfect" because it is sufficient for the sins of the whole world and it is shared alike by all chosen believers. Heb. 10: 14.

8. The sentence. Our sinfulness and the vastness of our debt excludes all merit on our part and at the same time also every ground why God should receive us and declare us innocent in the judgment. Such a declara-

tion can only be secured "without any merit of mine, but only of mere grace," and in consideration of our surety who takes our place, points to His merit and appeals to the mercy of the Father. Rom. 3: 24. Thus the satisfaction of Christ is granted and imputed to me by God (my bond is cancelled and its payment put to my account and placed to my credit), and indeed so perfectly that God now looks upon me "as if I never had had, nor committed any sin; yea, as if I had fully accomplished all that obedience which Christ hath accomplished for me." 2 Cor. 5: 19, 21, Rom. 5: 20, Isa. 1: 18.

9. The one who announces the sentence and makes it effectual is God the Holy Ghost, who by the word assures the heart of the pardoned sinner of his justification and seals it by His testimony that God has become our Father instead of being our Judge, and that we condemned sinners have become the children of God. Rom. 8: 15, 16.

II. To Whom Justification is Granted.

1. God grants the satisfaction of Christ to us of mere grace. We receive it and appropriate it by faith. Justification is not general, passing upon all sinners, but only upon those who believe and repent. Justification is accomplished in me only when "I embrace such benefit with a believing heart." Rom. 10: 10; 3: 26, 28.

2. Faith appropriates the justification granted to it in the following manner:

a) It acknowledges the necessity and completeness of the satisfaction of Christ. Acts 4: 12, Heb. 7: 25.

b) It hungers and thirsts after righteousness which avails before God. Matt. 5: 6.

c) It takes refuge in the satisfaction of Christ. Isa. 53: 4, 5.

d) It rejoices and glories in justification. Rom. 8: 31-34.

Question 61.

Why sayest thou, that thou art righteous by faith only?

Not that I am acceptable to God on account of the worthiness of my faith: but because only the satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ is my righteousness before God, and that I cannot receive and apply the same to myself in any other way than by faith only.

The Scriptures nowhere teach that we are justified on account of our faith, but by or through faith, and justification by faith excludes all ground for boasting and all idea of merit. If the "worthiness" of our faith were the cause of our justification, we would have ground for boasting, at least of the dignity or excellence of our faith. Faith itself, however, is a free gift of God's grace, and, therefore, can merit nothing for us. Eph. 2: 8, 9. Therefore it is not of faith in the sense of a good work on the part of believers, but in the sense of an instrument whereby they lay hold of Christ's merits and appropriate them.

2. A gold ring in which is set a precious stone derives its value not from the gold, but from the jewel which it contains. In the same way our faith and confidence in Christ's merits do not make us righteous on account of their worthiness as a good work, but on account of the merits of Christ which it embraces as the most precious gem.

3. The satisfaction of Christ is complete. It therefore needs nothing to supplement it and excludes such an idea. Therefore it "only" is our righteousness. 1 Cor. 1: 30, 31.

4. Faith is necessary as a means in order that we may appropriate the righteousness of Christ, since it acknowledges and agrees that only the satisfaction, righteousness and holiness of Christ is our righteousness before God. In so far it is necessary, because it is

the only means ordained by God. But in this respect it is only like the hand with which a beggar receives a piece of bread that is offered to him. The beggar's hunger is not satisfied by the hand, but by the bread which he takes and puts into his mouth. Rom. 3 : 22, Heb. 11 : 7. It is not to be understood that Abraham's faith was looked upon as something meritorious, for the sake of which he was accounted righteous. Such a conception is excluded by the preceding verse (2) and the following (4). Rom. 3 : 28.

5. Examples. The wedding garment. Matt. 22 : 11-13. The beggars who are invited accept the garment that is given to them and put it on. The guest who rejects it is cast out, because without this garment no one is permitted to take part in the feast. The lost son. Luke 15 : 11-32. That the son in his misery longs for his father's house and returns home as he is, is not credited to him by his father as a merit, but he receives him out of mere grace.

Question 62.

But why cannot our good works be the whole or part of our righteousness before God ?

Because that the righteousness, which can be approved of before the tribunal of God, must be absolutely perfect, and in all respects conformable to the divine law : and also that our best works in this life are all imperfect and defiled with sin.

1. As little as we are justified before God on account of our faith, so little also are we justified on account of good works which are fruits of faith and which neither by themselves nor in connection with faith constitute our righteousness.

2. The idea of righteousness by works springs from pride and from an impenitent heart which is not disposed to humble itself thoroughly and to receive anything as a reward without personal merit.

3. Righteousness by works cannot stand aside of righteousness by faith and is impossible in the sight of God. For God demands a righteousness "absolutely perfect," conformed to His law in the greatest as well as in the least. Matt. 22 : 37, 39, Gal. 3 : 10, James 2 : 10, 11.

4. Under "good works" and "our best works" are here not to be understood the works of the natural, but of the regenerate, renewed man. These also cannot stand before the demands of the divine law, because they are "imperfect," *i. e.*, they do not fully answer these demands and are defiled with sin, especially with the sin of selfishness. (Compare Peter, "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?" Matt. 19 : 27.) Phil. 3 : 12, Isa. 64 : 6.

5. The Word of God excludes clearly and definitely all meritoriousness as the entire or partial cause of righteousness. Gal. 2 : 16, Rom. 11 : 6, Gal. 2 : 21.

6. Of ourselves we do not have the power to perform good works, and, therefore, in their ultimate ground we cannot claim them as our own. John 15 : 5, 1 Cor. 4 : 7.

7. Paul and James both appeal to the example of Abraham, Paul on behalf of faith and James on behalf of works, without, however, contradicting each other. Paul speaks (Rom. 4) of those who wish to derive their justification from good works; James (James 2 : 14-26) speaks of professors who say that they have faith, but who do not possess that living faith from which good works (as its fruit) proceed, without, however, becoming meritorious.

8. Example. The rich young man. Matt. 19 : 16-22. With all his keeping of the law, the young man lacked the real foundation, faith and love, a new heart, from which selfishness has been driven out.

Question 63

What! do not our good works merit, which yet God will reward in this and a future life?

This reward is not of merit, but of grace.

Questions 63 and 64 treat of two objections which are brought against the doctrine of justification by faith only, the one (Question 63) is plainly based upon the Scriptures, the other (Question 64) upon experience.

I. The Promised Reward.

1. To those who walk in righteousness and holiness before God, a reward, a recompense, is promised in God's Word. Gen. 15: 1, Matt. 5: 12, 1 Tim. 4: 8.

2. The promised reward is prosperity in this life, eternal salvation and glory in the future life. Eph. 6: 2, 3, 1 Peter 5: 4.

II. The Reward Not of Merit.

1. It is not a reward which God owes to us (Rom. 11: 35), neither is there a reward we can demand of God; for

a) We are under obligation to do good works. Luke 17: 10.

b) It is God Himself who works in us, both to will and to do good works. Phil. 2: 13.

c) God does not stand in need of our good works. Acts 17: 24.

d) There is no relation between the service rendered and the reward bestowed. Matt. 25: 21.

2. But those who think that godliness is a profession (1 Tim. 6: 5) in the pursuit of which one may earn by good works the reward promised for the present and the future life, are "proud, knowing nothing" (verse 4). Luke 13: 25-27.

III. The Reward is of Grace.

1. The day-laborer receives wages for service rendered, which form a recompense for his labor. The wages are therefore regulated according to his work. As the labor, so the reward, says the proverb. But it is otherwise with the father, who, in order to show his love for his child and to bring it joy, rewards it for having served him faithfully and for having labored out of love to him. In this case the measure of service does not determine the measure of the reward. Ps. 103 : 13.

2. When the wages exceed the value of the work, it is grace which is thereby manifested. This is the case with the rewards which God gives, and we can, therefore, speak only of a reward of grace. John 4 : 36-38, Matt. 20 : 14, 15. The thief on the cross received the reward of grace without the least work. Luke 23 : 43.

3. The Lord promises the reward of grace to His own.

a) To show that He is pleased with good works. Matt. 25 : 21 ; 10 : 41, 42.

b) To encourage His own to persevere in the race of life and to endure its conflicts and its sufferings. 1 Cor. 9 : 24, 2 Tim. 2 : 5, Heb. 11 : 26, Rev. 2 : 10.

Question 64.

But doth not this doctrine make men careless and profane?

By no means: for it is impossible that those who are implanted into Christ by a true faith, should not bring forth fruits of thankfulness.

I. The Objection.

1. On the part of those who teach justification by works (not only in the Romish Church), it is objected that if justification were not secured before God by good works, and it were possible by faith to become free from

sin and its punishment so easily, men would become "careless and profane," *i. e.*, they would rest in a state of false security and presumption.

2. It cannot be denied that there may be and that there are among us, people who turn the grace of God into lasciviousness. Of this, however, the doctrine is not the cause. The ground thereof is to be found in the fact that such persons do not have true and living faith.

3. The same plea was already made to the Apostle Paul and refuted by him. Rom. 3: 8, 31; 6: 1, 2.

There were also persons in the Apostolic churches who sought to abuse this doctrine. Jude v. 4.

II. The Defence.

1. It is impossible that the doctrine of justification by faith should have a tendency to make men wicked. For those who are justified by "true faith" are "ingrafted into Christ," and thereby become partakers of His spirit and life, the spirit of sanctification and a sanctified life. Gal. 5: 24, 1 John 3: 9, Matt. 7: 18.

2. As good fruit is the necessary product of a good tree, so from justification by faith there necessarily proceed good works, as "fruits of thankfulness." We, therefore, do not in the least repudiate good works, but only their meritoriousness, and that upon the basis of the Scriptures. It is also evident that only those "good works" have a moral value in the sight of God which proceed from love to Him and from thankfulness for the justification freely offered and embraced by faith, over against "good works," performed to gain the favor of God, from mercenary motives, and, therefore, in reality from selfishness. John 15: 5, 8, 2 Cor. 5: 14, 15, Tit. 3: 7, 8.

OF THE HOLY SACRAMENTS.

Question 65.

Since then we are made partakers of Christ, and all his benefits, by faith only, whence doth this faith proceed?

From the Holy Ghost, who works faith in our hearts by the preaching of the Gospel, and confirms it by the use of the sacraments.

The Holy Ghost is the author of faith in the heart and uses as its means for this purpose, 1. The Word of God, and 2. The Holy Sacraments. The doctrine of the Sacraments is, therefore, closely joined to the third part of the Apostles' Creed. Since faith is produced by the Word and confirmed by the Sacraments, and these are also the means through which the Holy Ghost assures and seals His grace to us, they are called the means of grace. In them we have both the communication (the Holy Scriptures) and the seal (the Holy Sacraments) of the grace of God in Christ Jesus.

I. The Operation of the Holy Ghost Through the Word.

1. By the Gospel is to be understood the main contents of the entire Word of God (the canonical Scriptures). Compare Question 19.

2. God can also, when it is His desire, produce faith in an extraordinary manner without the Word, as, *e. g.*, in the case of the wise men from the East. Matt. 2: 2. But according to the divine order the ordinary means of awakening faith is the preaching of the Word. 1 Cor. 1: 21, Rom. 10: 17.

3. The trustworthiness of the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God rests upon the following grounds:

a) It contains the revelation of the greatest mysteries (the Being of God, the Incarnation of the Son of God and our Redemption, Eternal Salvation, etc.), and its

authors were for the most part unlearned men. Ps. 87 : 3, Acts 4 : 13.

b) The harmony of its contents, although the several books were composed by different men and at different times.

c) The fulfillment of its prophecies.

d) The miracles performed by the holy men who were its authors.

e) The effects of the Holy Scriptures upon individual souls, as well as in the general extension of the kingdom of God.

f) But above all, the testimony of the Holy Ghost in the hearts of believers. Rom. 1 : 16.

4. The Word of God is used when it is heard and read. To its right use belong both the hearing and the reading of it.

a) Not out of curiosity, but from a desire for salvation. 1 Peter 2 : 2.

b) With prayer for the illumination of the Holy Ghost. Ps. 119 : 18.

c) With reverence for Almighty God, who speaks to us through it. Ex. 3 : 5.

d) By attentive search into the meaning of the Word. Acts 17 : 11.

e) Diligently and perseveringly. Col. 3 : 16.

f) That it be kept and pondered also after the hearing and reading of it. Luke 2 : 19 ; 11 : 28.

g) By applying it to one's own heart and life. Ps. 119 : 105, James 1 : 22-24.

5. As by the rays of the same sun wax is softened and clay is hardened, so the Word of God has a different effect upon the elect and the lost. Acts 2 : 37 ; 7 : 54, 1 Cor. 1 : 18, Acts 13 : 48, Mark 4 : 11, 12.

6. The Holy Ghost works faith in the elect, not in a magical or forcible manner, but a) by illuminating our minds and convincing us of the divine truth concerning

our misery and our salvation in Christ only, and *b*) by inclining our wills and prevailing upon us to put confidence in it. Heb. 4: 12, Jer. 23: 29, John 6: 37, 44, Acts 16: 14.

II. The Operation of the Holy Ghost Through the Sacraments.

1. Sacrament is not a Scriptural expression. The word is derived from the Latin, and among the Romans it meant the military oath which the soldiers took in allegiance to the Emperor. In the old Latin translations of the Bible it was used to render the Greek word “mysterium,” *i. e.*, a mystery, or something that is consecrated. *Mysterium* signified among the Greeks also, either something secret or the mysterious sign of a secret, or something that had a mysterious signification which was known only to the initiated.

2. The Holy Ghost makes use of both Word and Sacraments, the former to work faith in our hearts, the latter to confirm faith in our hearts, *i. e.*, to strengthen and to establish it; the former by hearing, the latter by seeing and feeling. The Church father Augustine calls the Sacrament “the visible Word.” Calvin says: “It is certain that the Sacraments have no other purpose than to offer and to represent Christ to us and in Him the treasures of heavenly grace.”

Rom. 4: 11, “He received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised. . .” Circumcision was a confirmation of his faith by which he had already become a partaker of righteousness. Acts 8: 36-38, “and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the

eunuch; and he baptized him." Philip did not, therefore, baptize the eunuch that he might be saved through baptism, but that this should be to him a confirmation of the faith by which he had already embraced and appropriated the salvation which had been promised for Christ's sake.

Question 66

What are the sacraments?

The sacraments are holy visible signs and seals, appointed of God for this end, that by the use thereof he may the more fully declare and seal to us the promise of the gospel, viz., that he grants us freely the remission of sin, and life eternal, for the sake of that one sacrifice of Christ, accomplished on the cross.

I. What Belongs to the Sacrament.

1. In this connection we are not only to consider the sacraments of the new, but also those of the old covenant, since in the New Testament reference is made to them. Rom. 4: 11, 1 Cor. 5: 7.

2. To a sacrament belong, *a)* the visible, material sign and seal, *b)* the institution by God, or by Christ, *c)* the invisible heavenly grace which the signs and seals signify and assure to us.

3. The visible sign must be related to the invisible grace to the extent that there be a similarity between the two. Circumcision related to the destiny of the race descended from Abraham as a covenant people dedicated unto the Lord (Gen. 17: 1-11); the passover indicated God's forbearance which the blood of the lamb upon the doorposts at their departure from Egypt made manifest (Ex. 12: 13), and the social community which had arisen through God's leadership and which found expression in the common meal. Ex. 12: 4, 6. Water as the ordinary means of purification points in baptism to the purification from sin (Acts 22: 16); the breaking of the bread and the pouring out of the wine into

the cup, to the violent death of Christ upon the cross and to the shedding of His blood. 1 Cor. 11 : 24, Matt. 20 : 28. The Church fathers call the sacrament "the visible sign of invisible grace."

4. "Visible signs and seals." They represent and confirm to the eye in a sensible and perceptible way what we perceive by the ear, through the word, the promise of the Gospel.

5. They are called "holy," *a*) because they are given to us by the holy God and represent the most holy mysteries of faith; *b*) because they are destined for holy purposes and must be used with holy reverence. That is holy which is set apart from its ordinary use and is devoted to the service of God. Ex. 29 : 33.

6. "Appointed of God." For no one has power to appoint signs and seals for the promises of God but He Himself (God or Christ), who has given these promises. Ps. 111 : 4, Acts 7 : 8, Ex. 12 : 27, Matt. 28 : 18, 19, 1 Cor. 11 : 23.

7. The invisible, heavenly grace of the sacraments is "remission of sin and life eternal" which God "grants us freely, for the sake of that one sacrifice of Christ, accomplished on the cross."

II. The Purpose of the Sacraments.

1. The purpose of the sacraments is the confirmation (establishing) of faith through the memorial of Christ's sacrifice accomplished on the cross and the assurance of the fruit of this sacrifice, the forgiveness of sins and eternal life, through faith. The Holy Ghost works, therefore, through the sacraments only in those who believe. Faith does not constitute the sacrament, but belongs to it, and it is strengthened by the same. Mark 16 : 16, Ex. 12 : 43.

2. The sacraments as signs are to make more comprehensible to us and as seals are to confirm, *i. e.*,

strengthen the promise of the Gospel, viz., that God, for the sake of the one sacrifice of Christ accomplished on the cross, freely grants to us forgiveness of sins and eternal life. They are therefore not mere signs, but at the same time seals and pledges. Gen. 17: 11, Rom. 4: 11, Ex. 13: 9, 1 Cor. 11: 24, 25. As Christ connected the institution of the Lord's Supper with the last Passover, He manifestly had in mind when He used the words "memorial," "remembrance," the word of the unleavened bread.

3. Sacraments are signs of the covenant and there is attached to them a reciprocal obligation. God obligates Himself in them to forgive us our sins and to grant us eternal life; we in return obligate ourselves to believe in Christ and to walk in the new life. 1 John 1: 7, 2 Tim. 2: 19.

4. The sacraments are not offerings.

In like manner they are not "ecclesiastical acts," but "divine acts," for the one who acts is alone the Holy Ghost, in comparison with which the outer service in the use of the sacraments recedes as something of secondary importance.

5. The sacraments fulfill their purpose only "by the use thereof" (in that they are used); they have accordingly as signs and seals significance only for and during their use.

The administration of the sacraments belongs only to the ordained ministers of the Word, upon whose personal worthiness or unworthiness the efficacy of the sacraments is not dependent. 1 Cor. 4: 1, 4. A case of necessity which might demand a departure from this order does not occur. For, as Augustine says, not the privation, but contempt for the sacraments condemns. Luke 7: 30. The Reformed Church, therefore, rejects also so-called private or hasty baptism through midwives or other persons; also in principle private com-

munion and grants such only when with the sick others also partake of the supper, thereby making it a real "communion" (mutual participation).

Question 67.

Are both word and sacraments then ordained and appointed for this end, that they may direct our faith to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, on the cross, as the only ground for our salvation?

Yes, indeed; for the Holy Ghost teaches us, in the Gospel, and assures us by the sacraments, that the whole of our salvation depends upon that one sacrifice of Christ, which he offered for us on the cross.

1. As little as the mere hearing of the Word of God, so little does the mere use of the sacraments effect salvation. This rests alone upon the sacrifice of Christ, accomplished for us on the cross, to which both word and sacrament point, and which we must lay hold of by faith. Rom. 2: 25, "For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision." So baptism also does not benefit without faith. Mark 16: 16, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Judas, Simon Magus, Ananias and Sapphira, Demas and others were also baptized and yet were lost. 1 Cor. 11: 20, 30.

2. Both Word and Sacrament point to one and the same thing, to the sacrifice of Christ accomplished for us which is the only ground of our salvation. 1 Cor. 3: 11.

a) The star and the kernel of the entire Word of God, the gospel in the old and new covenant, is the announcement of redemption through the sacrifice of Christ, as it is promised and typified in the old covenant and fulfilled in the new. 1 Cor. 1: 23.

b) The idea of the sacraments in the old and the new covenant is nothing other than to represent the sacrifice of Christ before the eyes and to impress it upon the heart. Rom. 6: 3, 1 Cor. 11: 26.

3. The difference between Word and Sacrament consists only in the manner in which they point to the sacrifice of Christ and the way in which the Holy Ghost operates through them (to awaken and to confirm faith).

4. With reference to the meaning of the sacraments two errors are to be avoided : one must not see in them too much nor too little. The signs must not be confused with the things signified ; on the other hand, the sacraments must not be taken as mere empty signs and ceremonies.

Question 68

How many sacraments has Christ instituted in the new covenant or testament ?

Two : Holy Baptism, and the Holy Supper.

1. In the Old Testament there are various types which are applied to the sacraments of the New Testament, *e. g.*, the pillar of cloud and the passage through the Red Sea, the manna and the water out of the rock. 1 Cor. 10: 1–4. Christ in this passage is called the “rock,” but as the “spiritual” in distinction from the natural rock from which the water flowed.

2. The old covenant, like the new, had only two sacraments : circumcision and the passover, for only these two were permanent institutions for the ancient covenant people. The so-called Old Testament sacraments, named above, were of a temporary character.

a) Circumcision not only constituted reception into the covenant of God, but it also pointed to the purification of the heart, regeneration ; it took place, therefore, only once. Gen. 17: 7–14, Deut. 30: 6.

b) The passover, which was killed and eaten, was the sacrament of redemption through the blood of the lamb of God and the continued renewal of the cov-

enant. Therefore it was repeated every year. Ex. 12 : 13, 25-27.

3. To the two sacraments of the old covenant correspond the two of the new : to circumcision, holy baptism ; to the passover, the holy communion.

a) Baptism is the seal (sacrament) of our regeneration and the reception into the covenant of God ; therefore it is performed only once. Col. 2 : 11-13.

b) The Lord's Supper is the seal (sacrament) of the nourishing of the new man, his growth in faith and the continued renewal of the covenant. Wherefore it is often repeated. 1 Cor. 5 : 7.

4. In the new covenant Christ instituted only two sacraments, holy baptism and the holy communion, as the ancient Church also knew and used only these two. They alone fulfill the conception of a sacrament. Being instituted by Christ, the institution receives its validity from God. As is His word, so also are His acts, the Father's. John 12 : 49.

5. Christ instituted the sacraments at the close of His redemptive work : the holy supper when He was about to enter upon death and to offer Himself as a sacrifice ("this is my body, which is broken; my blood, which is shed"), and holy baptism when he was about to enter heaven and assume the rule of His kingdom ("disciple all nations").

6. The Roman Catholic Church accepts seven sacraments. Besides baptism and the Lord's Supper, they accept confirmation, penance, marriage, priestly consecration and extreme unction. These five ecclesiastical acts, which in early Christianity were not considered sacraments, do not fulfill the conception of a sacrament in all respects, as this is set forth in the Scriptures.

Confirmation, priestly consecration and extreme unction lack institution by Christ. Marriage and penance are indeed divine ordinances, but the visible sign

is lacking. Besides, marriage and priestly consecration fall short of the true idea of a sacrament, because priests are not allowed to marry, and yet sacraments are to be for the benefit of all believers. Extreme unction is administered only in anticipation of death, while the passages, Mark 6: 13 and James 5: 14, which are quoted in support of it, promise the restoration (v. 15) of the sick.

OF HOLY BAPTISM.

Question 69.

How art thou reminded and assured by holy baptism that the one sacrifice upon the cross is of real advantage to thee?

Thus, that Christ appointed this external washing with water, adding thereunto this promise that I am as certainly washed, by his blood and Spirit, from all the pollution of my soul, that is, from all my sins, as I am washed externally with water, by which the filthiness of the body is commonly washed away.

1. Washings, as well as sprinkling with water or blood, were appointed in the law under the old covenant as symbolical acts of purification and consecration; *e. g.*, with water, Ex. 29: 4; the water of sprinkling in connection with the sacrifice noted in Num. 19; with blood, Ex. 29: 21; Lev. 14: 7, for the cleansing of the lepers; with blood and water, Heb. 9: 19–22. Under the figure of sprinkling, the prophets announced that God Himself in the time to come would spiritually renew and cleanse both Jews (Ezek. 36: 25–27); and Gentiles (Isa. 52: 15). Compare Heb. 12: 24.

2. The baptism of John the Baptist preceded Christian baptism. Jesus Himself was baptized by John, in accordance with the order established by God. Matt. 3: 15. Jesus submitted to the baptism of repentance, not because He had any sins of His own to confess, but

because upon Him as the Son of man and the Lamb of God were laid the sins of the world. After His public appearance the disciples of Jesus also baptized; Jesus Himself did not baptize. John 3: 22, 23; 4: 1, 2. Baptism was the sign of admission to discipleship. The baptism of John and of the disciples of Jesus, both as to its outward sign and seal, and as to its contents, was like our baptism, with this exception, that the sacrifice of Christ upon the ground of which forgiveness took place, was yet in the future. Matt. 3: 11. The "disciples" at Ephesus who had believed on Christ, but had only received the baptism of John, after having been instructed by Paul, were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Acts 19: 1-7.

3. Christ instituted holy baptism as the sacrament of the new covenant. Matt. 28: 19.

4. "This external washing with water." Originally baptism was more generally performed by immersing the candidate three times in water, which was to signify that the old man had been given over to death and that a new man was to come forth. Rom. 6: 3, 4, Col. 2: 12, Eph. 5: 26. The words "taufen" (baptize) from tauchen and "taufe" (baptism) point to the practice of immersion. Without a doubt baptism was administered already in the times of the apostles by pouring or sprinkling water upon the head, in cases of sickness, and in times and places of persecution, where baptism had to be performed in the houses. This may also be taken for granted in the baptism of the centurion, Cornelius, and his house (Acts 10: 47, 48), and of the jailer at Philippi and his household in his home in the prison (Acts 16: 33). The Greek Church still holds to immersion as essential in baptism, while in the western Churches, since the close of the thirteenth century, the sprinkling of the person to be baptized with water has generally taken the place of

immersion. The sprinkling of the head with water is suggestive of the complete immersion of the head. The apostles speak of a sprinkling with the blood of Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 1: 2, Heb. 10: 22; 12: 24. Among us baptism is performed by thrice sprinkling with water the forehead of the one to be baptized while pronouncing the words: "I baptize thee in the (upon the) name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Ghost. Amen."

Calvin. "Whether one be entirely immersed in baptism, whether it be three times or once, or be only sprinkled with water, is not of importance, but must be left to the option of the Churches, to be decided by climatic conditions, although according to common acceptance the word "taufen" (to baptize) signifies to immerse, and the ancient Church practiced this mode of baptism."

5. By holy baptism as a sign I am "reminded" and as a seal "assured" that I am as certainly washed, by His blood and spirit, from all the pollution of my soul, that is, from all my sins, as I am washed externally with water; that, therefore, the one sacrifice of Christ is of advantage to me.

A distinction is made between the outward transaction, the purification of the body and the inner purification of the soul; the visible is intended to assure us of the invisible. The language is not simply: "as so," but "as certainly as so certainly also." By the water the filthiness of the body is washed away. This cannot be denied. Just as little can it be denied that for the believer the soul is purified from sin through the blood and Spirit of Christ. Isa. 64: 6, Tit. 3: 5.

Question 70.

What is it to be washed with the blood and Spirit of Christ?

It is to receive of God remission of sins, freely, for the sake of Christ's blood, which he shed for us in his sacrifice upon the cross; and also, to be renewed by the Holy Ghost, and sanctified to be members of Christ, that so we may more and more die unto sin and lead holy and unblamable lives.

I. The Washing With the Blood of Christ.

1. We are washed with the blood of Christ, and are thereby assured that the blood of Christ is of real advantage to us. It secures to us

- a) "Remission of sins." Acts 2 : 38.
- b) "Of God freely." Tit. 3 : 5-7.
- c) "For the sake of Christ's blood, which He shed for us in His sacrifice upon the cross." Rev. 1 : 5.

2. We are thereby assured of all that Christ has accomplished for us by His sacrifice.

II. The Washing by the Spirit of Christ.

1. We are washed by the Spirit of Christ, and are thereby assured that the Holy Ghost is operative in us. We are thus

- a) "Renewed by the Holy Ghost." John 3 : 5, 2 Cor. 5 : 17.

b) "Sanctified to be members of Christ," and consequently baptism seals our reception into the Church, which is the body of Christ. Eph. 1 : 23, 1 Cor. 12 : 13.

c) "That so we may more and more die unto sin and lead holy and unblamable lives." This is the obligation which holy baptism lays upon us. Gal. 3 : 27, Col. 2 : 6, Rom. 6 : 4.

"More and more." Baptism does not give us the assurance that we are already complete Christians, but obligates and incites us to growth in sanctification. Eph. 4 : 15.

2. Thus we are assured that Christ works in us by His Spirit.

III. Two Benefits of Christ.

There are two benefits of Christ, the possession of which is sealed to us in holy baptism: Regeneration and sanctification, which consist in the dying off of the old and the resurrection of the new man. 1 Cor. 6: 11. Paul explains here what it means to be "washed," viz., first, to be justified for the sake of the Lord Jesus, *i. e.*, for the sake of His merit and the shedding of His blood, and secondly, to be sanctified by the Spirit of God.

1. The blood of Christ justifies and the Spirit of Christ sanctifies, *i. e.*,

a) The blood takes away the guilt and punishment of sin, the Spirit the power of sin.

b) The blood secures the righteousness which avails before God, the Spirit produces the image of God in us.

Question 71.

Where has Christ promised us that he will as certainly wash us by his blood and Spirit, as we are washed with the water of baptism?

In the institution of baptism, which is thus expressed: Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.

This promise is also repeated, where the Scripture calls baptism the washing of regeneration and the washing away of sins.

I. The Baptismal Command.

1. The institution of baptism lies in the command which Jesus gave at the time of His ascension for the extension of His kingdom. This command, exactly translated, is as follows: "Go ye and make disciples of all nations, in that ye baptize them upon the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Ghost, and

teach them to observe all things that I have commanded you." Matt. 28: 19, 20.

2. While the sacrament of circumcision set forth and sealed reception into God's covenant with Israel, for the new covenant in Christ this limitation falls away and the citizens of the kingdom of God as disciples of Jesus are gathered out of all nations. Acts 10: 34, 35.

3. As a matter of course in the case of unbaptized adults, instruction as to the nature of the ordinance must precede baptism; but according to the exact translation the words of institution cannot be used by the Baptists against infant baptism. They generally appeal to the words thus expressed (in Luther's translation): Go ye, therefore, and (first) teach all nations, and (then) baptize them. Baptism is performed "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," *i. e.*, of the Triune God. The sacrament is not merely administered "in the name" or by the command of God, but also upon or "into His name." We are, as it were, inwardly immersed into the name of God, *i. e.*, ingrafted into His communion, as we are outwardly immersed in water. Num. 6: 27, Jer. 15: 16.

5. Baptism is then properly administered when it is performed by means of sprinkling with pure water, and by the use of the words of institution: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost," and by the ordained minister of the Church.

II. The Promise of Baptism.

1. The promise reads: "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." Mark 16: 16. The promise of salvation, which is joined to the sacrament, avails only for believers. For he that believeth not, shall be damned—although he is baptized.

2. The Triune God gives to the one who believes, the assurance that He is His covenant God. God the Father gives him the promise that He has accepted him as His child; God the Son, that He has imparted to him His merit; God the Holy Ghost, that He sanctifies him and preserves him unto eternal life.

3. The promise made by Christ at the institution of baptism is "repeated" where Christ calls baptism "the washing of regeneration, and the washing away of sins." These expressions are, however, to be interpreted in harmony with Christ's words of institution. Tit. 3 : 5 (compare John 3 : 5, 6), Acts 22 : 16.

Question 72.

Is then the external baptism with water the washing away of sin itself?

Not at all: for the blood of Jesus Christ only, and the Holy Ghost, cleanse us from all sin.

1. The Scriptures nowhere say that the power and efficacy of baptism reside in the water, and in 1 Peter 3 : 21, where the water of baptism is directly spoken of, it is characterized as a "covenant of a good conscience with God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

2. A material substance cannot effect anything spiritual and heavenly.

3. The Æthiopian eunuch, the centurion Cornelius, Lydia and the jailer at Phillippi had saving faith before they were baptized with water. If the water were the efficient agent, then all baptized persons, even the wicked, would be saved.

5. The Scriptures expressly declare that only the blood of Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost cleanse us from all sin. 1 John 1 : 7, 1 Cor. 6 : 11, Eph. 5 : 26, John 19 : 34. Under the old covenant the deliverance from sin was accomplished by blood and purification

by water. Both, however, were a type of the real deliverance from sin by the blood of Christ, and of the real purification by His Spirit, who was promised under the figure of pure water. Ezek. 36 : 25, John 7 : 38, 39, 1 John 5 : 6.

Question 73.

Why then doth the Holy Ghost call baptism the washing of regeneration and the washing away of sins ?

God speaks thus not without great cause, to wit : not only thereby to teach us, that as the filth of the body is purged away by water, so our sins are removed by the blood and Spirit of Jesus Christ : but especially, that by this divine pledge and sign he may assure us that we are spiritually cleansed from our sins, as really as we are externally washed with water.

1. When baptism is spoken of in the Scriptures as the washing of regeneration, and the washing away of sins, it is done for two important reasons, viz., that God may teach us by a symbol, by the outward, visible element of water what takes place in the soul, and that in the water He might give us a “holy sign and seal” that this inward, invisible process of purification from sin will be effectually accomplished in us. The statement is, therefore, not simply : “as water—so the blood and Spirit of Christ,” but “that I am as certainly washed, by His blood and Spirit—as I am washed externally with water.” Rev. 1 : 5 ; 7 : 14.

2. It might be said that one who has been condemned to lifelong imprisonment, obtains his freedom by the proclamation of pardon bearing the king’s seal. And yet it is not the letter and the seal, but in reality the gracious will and command of the King which effect the deliverance.

Question 74.

Are infants also to be baptized?

Yes: for since they, as well as the adult, are included in the Covenant and Church of God; and since redemption from sin by the blood of Christ and the Holy Ghost, the Author of faith, is promised to them no less than to the adult; they must therefore, by baptism, as a sign of the covenant, be also incorporated into the Christian Church; and be distinguished from the children of infidels, as was done in the Old Covenant or Testament by circumcision, instead of which baptism was instituted in the New Covenant.

1. Objection has been brought against infant baptism on the ground that it is not commanded in the Scripture, which nowhere states expressly that children also were baptized. In addition to the fact that there is nowhere a command that only men and women should be baptized, and that young children should be excluded from baptism, Christ gave command to baptize the nations, and the Apostles baptized entire families, because persons of all ages are to be consecrated to the Lord in His Church. It would indeed be strange that just in the families, whose baptism ("all his," Acts 10: 44, 47, 48; 16: 33; "the house," *i. e.*, the family, Acts 16: 15; 1 Cor. 1: 16—not "domestic servants," but according to an exact rendering "house," as in Acts 16: 15) is mentioned, there should have been no young children. Besides, infant baptism is mentioned by the Church fathers already in the second century.

2. Another objection urged is, that as the sacrament is to be a visible sign and seal for us, we, who are baptized in childhood, did not see and understand the same. To this it may be replied: That the fact of our baptism is attested by the sponsors, or witnesses, of the baptism and by the baptismal certificate. Besides we see when baptisms are administered, according to true Reformed usage in the church before the assembled

congregation, what took place when we were baptized, and are thereby ever reminded anew what significance baptism has for us.

3. But there are positive grounds why young children of Christian parents should be baptized.

a) "Since they, as well as the adult, are included in the covenant and Church of God." Gen. 17: 7. But of the seed of Abraham are not only his bodily descendants, but all those who are of the faith of Abraham. Rom. 4: 6, 1 Cor. 7: 14. Your children are holy. Not that they are without original sin, but that they belong to the covenant and Church of God.

b) Since redemption from sin by the blood of Christ and the Holy Ghost, the Author of faith, is promised to them no less than to the adult." Mark 10: 14-16, Acts 2: 38, 39.

c) "Since they are, by baptism, as a sign of the covenant, incorporated into the Christian Church; and are distinguished from the children of infidels, as was done in the Old Covenant or Testament by circumcision, instead of which baptism was instituted in the New Covenant." Gen. 17: 11, 12. If children were not received into the Church under the New Covenant, their position would be inferior to that under the Old Covenant. In this respect the New Covenant is greater than the Old, since now children of both sexes, by receiving the sign of the covenant, are received into the same. Col. 2: 11, 12. According to this passage, baptism has taken for us the place of circumcision in the Old Covenant.

4. Only the young children of Christian parents (of believers) are allowed to be baptized, with reference to whom one may be confident that they will in the future be instructed in the truth of the Gospel at home, or in the school and church. Young children of Jews and heathen are only to be baptized when the parents are received into the Church at the same time with them.

5. The same obligation accompanies the baptism of children, as the baptism of adults, viz., to renounce the devil and all his works, and to live a holy life to the love and praise of God. Exorcism, *i. e.*, the expulsion of the devil from the one receiving baptism, is rejected by the Reformed Church as altogether unbiblical. 1 Cor. 7 : 14.

6. The practice of having sponsors is not found in those Reformed churches in which baptism is, without exception, administered in connection with divine worship. In the Directory of Worship of the Electoral Palatinate, issued in 1563, the question to the sponsors reads as follows: "Do you from a true faith in the promise of God in Christ Jesus, which is given to us and to our children, that He will be not only our God, but also our children's God to the most distant generation, desire that this child be baptized in this faith and receive the seal of divine sonship?" Answer: "Yes." The sponsors are not to be regarded as the representatives of the one receiving baptism, since no one can believe, confess or obligate himself for another, but they are principally witnesses that the child at such a time received baptism, and they obligate themselves next to the parents to care for its religious instruction.

7. With reference to the baptismal act, the Electoral Palatinate Directory of Worship proceeds to say (after the above answer of the sponsors has been given): "Here it is unnecessary to disrobe the child. It is sufficient that its head be uncovered. And then the minister will say: 'N. I baptize thee in the name of God the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Amen.'"

8. The admission or confirmation.

a) The Romish sacrament of confirmation (confirmation) was abolished by the Reformation, and the youth of proper age, if found prepared after receiving the cus-

tomary instruction, were admitted to the table of the Lord. In the first half of the seventeenth century the rite of confirmation was introduced, but only in the middle of the century did it find general acceptance, and that at first in the Lutheran Church. In connection with the public service, the children, after the confession of their faith, were received by prayer and the laying on of hands into full membership of the Church and were admitted to the Lord's Supper. In harmony with this significance of the act it is called in the Reformed Church of Switzerland, admission, *i. e.*, admittance, which designation from the Reformed standpoint must be regarded as more correct than confirmation. The Electoral Palatinate Directory of Worship of 1563 only asks that children be instructed in the catechism with reference to their baptism, true Christian faith and repentance, so that, before they are admitted to the table of the Lord, they may confess their faith before the whole Christian congregation. The Directory of Worship of a'Lasco and Micronius of the year 1554 contains a like direction. Only the revised editions of 1634 and 1724 provide a formula or "form as to how children are received into the church when they confess their faith and are admitted for the first time to the Lord's table." According to this also it is not confirmation, but admission. The Hessian Church Directory of 1574 designates Christmas, Easter and Whit-Sunday as "confirmation" days for children whose names had been sent in four weeks previously. It also contains a formula for this purpose. In the oldest Reformed Directory of Lippe (Christian Church prayers and acts, 1686) the rubric reads: "Presentation and confirmation of the catechumens, who for the first time are admitted to the use of the holy supper." In the Palatinate the customary expression for the act of confirmation is to-day yet: "The children will be

presented.” Among the Reformed Confessions only the latest, the “declaration of Thorn” of 1645, refers to confirmation as an established custom. It says: We believe that it is proper to approve of the reference of the doctrine of the laying on of hands which, in Heb. 6: 12, is connected with the doctrine of baptism, to the practice of the Church, according to which the children, who have been instructed in the truths of the catechism before they are admitted to a participation in the Lord’s Supper, are presented to the congregation to give an account of their faith and to be commended to God by prayer with the laying on of hands, an act which was customary in connection with prayer and singing in the time of the patriarchs and subsequently. That this intercession with God and commending to Him of adult believers, after a prescribed examination, should be called confirmation, we readily accede to, even as this same custom has been regularly observed in our congregations.

The Palatinate princes were also publicly confirmed in the church. Electoral Prince Frederick (B. 1596), afterward Elector Frederick V., was asked the following questions, after having been instructed in the Heidelberg Catechism from 1606–1608 by his private tutor, Heinrich Alting,* when at twelve he was “presented” for confirmation. The first part of these questions had reference to faith. 1. Whether the prince had properly comprehended the system of faith in which he had hitherto been instructed. A brief confession formed the answer. 2. Whether he was able to defend this doctrine. Then followed the doctrinal differences with

* Heinrich Alting had previous to this time directed the studies of three young Reformed counts of Nassau, Solms and Isenburg in the Reformed college at Sedan, and returned thither in the same capacity in 1608 with the electoral prince. Later he became professor in Heidelberg, and died when professor in Groningen in 1644.

the Lutheran Church ("Lord's Supper, Person of Christ, Election, Providence"), and then with the Romish Church. 3. Whether he was prepared to confess his faith, which he had recognized as the true faith before the Church. 4. Whether he was determined to remain faithful to his confession, even under persecutions. The second part of the questions pertained to conduct. 1. Whether he knew how Christians should live. 2. Whether he would so live. 3. Whether he was prepared to promise this publicly before the entire congregation, before being admitted to, and to repeat those promises as often as he would partake of, the communion. 4. Whether he would allow himself to be exhorted out of the Word of God if he ever departed from this good resolution, and whether he would acquiesce in the admonitions and corrections of the Church.

b) If we desire to use the name "confirmation," we are in no case to understand by it a corroboration or confirmation of the baptismal covenant, neither on the part of the minister, nor on the part of the children; but only on the part of the latter a confirmation or public assent to the faith of the denomination in which they were instructed and of which they made confession before the congregation. They are in reality those who affirm, not those who are confirmed. To this also points the old Reformed custom, which still exists in the Palatinate churches, that the children extend the hand to the elders, as a token of the vow of fidelity. Upon their confession they are then admitted to the table of the Lord. Their "becoming of age" consists simply in this, that they are allowed to take upon themselves the place of their sponsors. They do not yet have a vote in the congregation, nor is confirmation any longer regarded as a close of their school life, and in the German Empire it no longer marks the period when a youth is permitted to take an oath. This now requires the completion of the sixteenth year.

c) In the time when Rationalism prevailed, confirmation was elevated to the importance of a sacrament, even above it, and to-day there is yet a great deal of this sentimental over-estimation. So also it is utterly contrary to the spirit of the Reformed Church, which everywhere and always insists upon truth and sobriety, and is averse to all manufactured impressiveness, when confirmation is made an occasion of sentimental excitation, or a spectacle, which feeds the vanity of parents and of children. The act should be earnest, real and simple.

d) Gisbert Voetius (Vuzius,) the most important authority of the Netherlands in Church polity (died 1676, when professor at Utrecht), "most decidedly approves of this method of procedure in the Church." "After the officiating minister has offered a prayer and has read the names of the different catechumens, an examination is to follow, which is to cover the whole catechism, and in which questions are to be directed to individuals, either in regular order or promiscuously, and, when necessary, the answers are to be repeated and explained more fully by the minister for the sake of the catechumens and the hearers. At the completion of the examination the following questions are to be put to them, to which they are all to give hearty responses: "Do you declare the doctrine of our Church, in as far as you have learned, heard and confessed the same, to be the true and wholesome doctrine, which is in conformity with the Holy Scriptures?" Answer: "Yes." "Do you promise by God's grace to remain constant in the confession of this wholesome doctrine, and to live and die in it?" Answer: "Yes." "Do you promise in conformity with this holy doctrine to lead at all times a pious, honorable and unblamable life, and to adorn your profession with good works?" Answer: "Yes." "Do you promise to submit your-

selves continually to the admonition, correction and discipline of the Church, if you should happen (which God forbid) to lapse in doctrine or in life?" Answer: "Yes."

To this solemn vow and promise the minister adds a benediction that God, who has commenced this good work and has furthered it, hitherto, by His grace, might confirm them in it, and accomplish it more and more until the day of Jesus Christ. "These are essentially the questions, which, along with others or more extensive ones, may be put by the minister."

"Lastly the entire act is concluded with thanksgiving and prayer, and the congregation is dismissed."

e) The form of benediction during the laying on of hands reads as follows in the Electoral Palatinate Directory of Worship of 1724: "God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost grant unto you His grace, shelter and protection from all evil, strength and help unto all good, for the sake of the merits of our only Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Amen."

In the Directory of Worship of Lippe of 1686: "After giving the answers (to the questions of confession) the children kneel, and the minister, who either lays his hands upon each of them, or extends them over them in a body, says: 'God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the only true and living God, confirm and strengthen you according to the riches of His mercy, that ye may be His children and His heirs, and prove yourselves such through your whole lives, to the glory of His great name and your present and eternal salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.'"

OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Question 75.

How art thou admonished and assured in the Lord's Supper, that thou art a partaker of that one sacrifice of Christ accomplished on the cross, and of all his benefits?

Thus, that Christ has commanded me, and all believers, to eat of this broken bread, and to drink of this cup, in remembrance of him; adding these promises, first, that his body was offered and broken on the cross for me, and his blood shed for me, as certainly as I see with my eyes the bread of the Lord broken for me, and the cup communicated to me; and further, that he feeds and nourishes my soul to everlasting life, with his crucified body and shed blood, as assuredly as I receive from the hands of the minister and taste with my mouth the bread and cup of the Lord, as certain signs of the body and blood of Christ.

I. The Supper and Its Guests.**1. The name of the Supper.**

a) The Holy Supper takes its name from the time when the Lord Jesus Christ instituted it, viz., on the evening or in the night when He was betrayed. On this account also it is called a supper.

b) It is called the Table or Supper of the Lord, because the Lord Himself has provided it for us, and is Himself present as host, and offers Himself as the heavenly food and drink.

c) It is called breaking of bread, Acts 2: 42, because the breaking of the bread is the most significant, symbolical act connected with it, pointing to the broken, *i. e.*, slain body of Christ, as His only sacrifice, accomplished on the cross. Compare 1 Cor. 10: 16, "The bread which we break."

d) Eucharist, which means thanksgiving, was its name in the ancient Church, suggested by the other prominent feature, the cup of thanksgiving, and because in connection with it we give thanks unto the Lord for the benefits, which He purchased for us by His sacri-

fice on the cross, and which He confirms to us in the Supper. Compare 1 Cor. 10: 16, "The cup of blessing which we bless."

e) It is called communion, which means fellowship, because thereby our communion or union with Christ, and the communion of believers with one another, is set forth and sealed.

The designation "sacrament of the altar" comes from the Romish Church, from the sacrifice of the mass performed on the "altar." We, as Reformed, therefore justly reject this designation.

2. The essential character of this sacrament is that of a meal, as the name already indicates. It points to the inward assimilation of that which we receive by eating and drinking. Valuables, which we receive, may be locked in a chest or carried upon the person, but food and drink enter our bodies, and are completely assimilated by the body. The former is an outward possession, this an inward, inseparable from our own life. The body can only receive and assimilate material food and drink through its organs. Spiritual food can only be received by the soul, the organ of the inner man. In the Holy Supper we, therefore, receive by the mouth into our bodies the earthly gifts of bread and wine, while the heavenly gifts, the body and blood of Christ, are united with our souls by faith. Where only earthly gifts are received, it is an ordinary eating and drinking; where only spiritual gifts, the Word and Spirit of God and the merits of Christ, are received and enjoyed, it is a spiritual eating. Where both spiritual gifts and material gifts, related to the spiritual, are received, it is called a sacramental eating and drinking.

3. The gifts.

a) The material gifts in the Holy Supper, as outer signs and seals, the so-called elements, are bread and

wine. They are the choicest products of the earth for food and drink, given by God Himself for the preservation and strengthening of the bodily life. Ps. 104: 14, 15.

b) The heavenly gifts in the Holy Supper, which are signified and visibly represented by bread and wine and which are given us for our inward quickening, are the body and blood of Christ, sacrificed on the cross. Christ Himself says in the words of institution: "This is my body, which is broken for you (on the cross); take and drink ye all of it; this is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you" (on the cross). Of the reception of a "glorified" body and blood the Scriptures give no intimation.

c) As little as in the nature of things in general the material and the spiritual can be transformed into each other, or can be mixed up with each other, so little can also here in the Holy Supper the material gifts be transformed into the spiritual, or the spiritual gifts be mixed up with the material.

The transformation of the body and blood of Christ into bread and wine, so that the latter are said to lose their nature and only retain the outward form and taste, is taught by the Romish Church. The other, that the body and blood of Christ, after the consecration during the Holy Supper, are present in bread and wine as substance, and are received by the mouth, is taught by the Lutheran Church. The Reformed Church teaches that we receive at the same time with the bread and wine, but unchanged and unmixed, the body and blood of Christ, the former after a bodily manner with our mouth, and the latter after a spiritual manner with the soul by faith. A wider difference between the Lutheran and the Reformed doctrine is this, that according to the former the unbelieving also receive the body present in the bread, and the blood of

Christ present in the wine, while the Reformed lay stress upon the fact that believers only receive the heavenly gifts, since the mouth is the instrument of the body for the reception of food and drink, while for the reception of spiritual gifts, faith, the organ, as it were, of the soul is required.

4. That Christ instituted the holy supper in conjunction with the passover, is neither accidental nor arbitrary, but points to the passover as the corresponding sacrament of the old covenant, from which the significance of the New Testament sacrament is to be learned. The holy supper points to the only sacrifice of Christ on the cross, accomplished for the redemption of sin, as the passover pointed to the slain lamb, on account of whose blood the destroying angel passed by the houses of the children of Israel at the time of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage (passover means to pass by or to spare). Christ joined the holy supper to the passover of the old covenant, in that He took for its institution of the bread and wine which were used in the celebration of the passover. He did not take of the lamb, but of the bread, because in that act He abolished the sacrament of the old covenant as a rite, and substituted for it a new rite, yet corresponding to the type and suggestive of His discourse (John 6) concerning the bread which came down from heaven to give life to the world, in which He also speaks of the eating of His flesh and the drinking of His blood.

As was the passover under the old covenant, so the holy supper as the sacrament of the new covenant is :

a) A memorial supper. As the passover was the commemoration of the deliverance from Egypt and the exemption of God's people from the judgment upon Egypt, so the holy supper commemorates the deliverance from sin through the only sacrifice of Christ on the cross and the forgiveness of sins through the blood of Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. 11 : 24, 25.

b) A covenant meal. By the common eating of the passover the communion of all the children of Israel as the people of God was to be set forth and confirmed. 1 Cor. 10: 16–18. The apostle explains here what he calls communion by referring to the sacrificial communion of the old covenant, which was set forth by the common participation in the sacrificial meal. Therefore the expression, the communion of the body and blood of Christ, does not indicate a union of the body and blood of Christ with bread and wine, but (compare “partakers of the altar”) on the one hand, the participation of the communicants in the only sacrifice of Christ on the cross and all His benefits, and, on the other hand, the communion which believers have with one another by partaking of the same food and drink.

c) A confession. The passover was a thankful confession on the part of the believing community of their gracious covenant keeping God and distinguished Israel as the people of God from the Gentiles in the same manner as did circumcision. Ex. 12: 43–45, 1 Cor. 11: 26.

II. Signs and Seals.

1. The sacrament of the holy supper is based upon the command given at the time of the institution by Christ “to eat of this broken bread and to drink of this cup in remembrance of Him.” 1 Cor. 11: 24, 25.

2. The promise of Christ consists in this, that His sacrifice on the cross is accomplished for us, and that He feeds our souls with His crucified body and offers His shed blood for drink unto eternal life. The confirmation of this promise we are to receive by eating the elements of bread and wine, after these have been consecrated for the celebration, *i. e.*, separated from their ordinary use. They are, therefore, the visible signs and seals or pledges of the invisible heavenly blessings which we receive in the supper.

a) Signs and seals of redemption through Christ. "That His body was offered and broken on the cross for me, and His blood shed for me, as certainly as I see with my eyes the bread of the Lord broken for me, and the cup communicated to me."

b) Signs and seals of our union with Christ. "That He feeds and nourishes my soul to everlasting life, with His crucified body and shed blood, as assuredly as I receive from the hands of the minister, and taste with my mouth the bread and cup of the Lord, as certain signs of the body and blood of Christ."

Question 76.

What is it then to eat the crucified body and drink the shed blood of Christ?

It is not only to embrace with a believing heart all the sufferings and death of Christ, and thereby to obtain the pardon of sin and life eternal; but also, besides that, to become more and more united to his sacred body, by the Holy Ghost, who dwells both in Christ and in us; so that we, although Christ is in heaven, and we on earth, are notwithstanding, "flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone;" and that we live and are governed forever by one Spirit, as members of the same body are by one soul.

Questions 76–80 are introduced in part to elucidate and establish Question 75, and in part to guard against error.

I. What the Guests Do at the Holy Supper.

1. As everything in the kingdom of God is arranged to serve spiritual ends, so also in the holy supper neither the earthly gift nor the outward eating and drinking are the main factors, but the heavenly gift and the spiritual participation. That which the Lord says in His discourse in John 6: 27–58 of His flesh as the true meat and of His blood as the true drink, which give and maintain eternal life, and of the eating and drinking of the same, does not have express reference

to the Lord's Supper, but it is helpful to the proper understanding of the same. The men of Capernaum, who had only a mind for the visible, the Lord sent away, and those of His disciples who were not rooted in faith, departed from Him on account of this "hard saying." ("Not in the discourse, but rather in their hearts lay the hardness."—*Calvin.*)

2. True guests at the table of the Lord are, therefore, those who do not look upon the visible, but upon the invisible (2 Cor. 4: 18), and who have living faith. For to eat the crucified body of Christ and to drink His shed blood, consists on our part in this, that we receive with believing hearts and have therein the forgiveness of sins and eternal life, the entire sufferings and death of Christ, which in the broken bread and poured out wine are set forth and sealed to us, that the same may be of real advantage to us. John 6: 50, 35, 54, 47.

II. What the Lord Does in the Holy Supper.

1. We do not unite ourselves with Him, but we are united with His body by the Holy Ghost, who dwells in Christ and in us. The union is thus effected, although Christ with His body is in heaven and we are upon the earth. John 6: 63, Col. 3: 1. On this account the deacon in the early Church, before the beginning of the celebration of the Lord's Supper, addressed the congregation: *Sursum corda!* i. e., lift up your hearts. 1 Cor. 11: 25. In a bodily manner Christ will come to His own only at the end of the world, and it is not to be overlooked that in connection with the words of institution of the Lord's Supper Paul makes reference to it!

2. The union with the body of Christ in the Holy Supper is so close and intimate that we are "of His flesh and of His bones." Eph. 5: 30. Paul manifestly had in view here the words of Adam, Gen. 2: 23, and

set forth the most intimate spiritual communion between Christ and His believers, the members of His spiritual body.

Although the eating and drinking of the body and blood of Christ in the supper are spiritual, and in the first place are of advantage to the spiritual man, in virtue of the connection of the soul with the body, our mortal body thereby partakes of the power of the eternal life to the extent to which the body and blood of Christ become in us the seed of immortality. John 6 : 54.

Question 77.

Where has Christ promised that he will as certainly feed and nourish believers with his body and blood, as they eat of this broken bread and drink of this cup?

In the institution of the supper, which is thus expressed : "The Lord Jesus, in the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me: After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, this cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death until he come."

This promise is repeated by the holy Apostle Paul, where he says, "the cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? for we, being many, are one bread and one body; because we are all partakers of that one bread."

I. The Institution of the Holy Supper.

1. *"The Lord Jesus :* He is the author of this Supper. It is for this reason called the Lord's Supper. We must, therefore, inquire what the Lord did, said, and commanded, as Cyprian appropriately admonishes us, when he says : *'If Christ alone is to be heard, we must not regard what any one before us has thought proper to be done; but what Christ, who is before all, has first done.'*

“The same night in which he was betrayed : This circumstance is added to teach us that Christ instituted His Supper at the last celebration of the Passover that He might show, 1. That there was now an end to all the ancient sacrifices, and that He substituted a new sacrament, which should henceforth be observed, the Passover being now abolished ; and that it signified the same thing which that did in the place of which it was substituted, with the exception of the difference of time. The Paschal Lamb signified that Christ would come, and offer Himself a sacrifice. The Lord’s Supper teaches that this is already accomplished. 2. That He might excite His disciples and us to a more attentive consideration of the cause on account of which He instituted this Supper, and that He might also show how solemnly He would commend it to our regard, in as much as He would not do any thing just before His death, except that which was of the greatest importance. Christ instituted it then at the time of His death that it might be, as it were, the testament, or last will of our Testator. In a word : Paul adds this circumstance that we may know, that Christ instituted this Supper as a memorial of Himself now ready to die.

“He took bread : The bread which Christ took was unleavened bread, such as they ate at the feast of the Passover. This circumstance, however, does not properly belong to the supper, any more than the evening at which time it was instituted ; for the use of unleavened bread at the institution was accidental. Hence we must not infer from this that there is any necessity for the use of such bread in the celebration of the Supper, or that Christ would lay down any particular way of baking or using it. Yet still the bread which is used in the celebration of the Lord’s Supper differs from common bread, for whilst the latter is eaten for the nourishment of the body, the former is received for

the nourishment of the soul, or for the confirmation of our faith, and union with Christ. It is here to be observed too that Christ is said to have taken bread from the table, that is, with His hand. Hence He did not take His body; nor did He take His body with, in or under the bread, except in a sacramental sense; for His body did not lie upon, but sat at the table.

“When he had given thanks: Matthew and Mark say of the bread, *when he had blessed it;* and of the cup, *when he had given thanks.* Luke and Paul say of the bread, *when he had given thanks.* Hence to bless and give thanks signify in this place the same thing, so that the mystery of the magical consecration of the Papists cannot be found in the difference of the language here used. Christ blessed, that is, gave thanks to His Father, and not to the bread, for spiritual blessings; because His work on earth was now finished, with the exception of the last act, which was just at hand, and because it pleased the Father to redeem the world by the death of His Son: or He gave thanks because the typical Passover was abolished, and that which was true and signified was now exhibited, and that the Church had a memorial of Him; or He may have given thanks for the wonderful gathering and preservation of the Church.

“He brake it: He broke the bread which He took from the table, and distributed the one bread among many, and not some invisible thing which was concealed in the bread. He did not break His body, but the bread. Hence Paul says, ‘The bread which we break.’ (1 Cor. 10: 16.) He distributed the one bread among many: because we being many are one body. Christ then broke the bread not merely for the purpose of distributing it, but also to signify thereby, 1. The greatness of His sufferings, and the separation of His soul from His body. 2. The communion of

many with His own body, and the bond of their union, and mutual love. ‘The bread which we break is it not the communion of the body of Christ; for we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread.’ (1 Cor. 10: 16.) The breaking of the bread is, therefore, a necessary ceremony both on account of its signification, and for the confirmation of our faith, and is to be retained in the celebration of the Supper: 1. Because of the command of Christ, *Do this*. 2. Because of the authority and example of the Church in the times of the Apostles, which in view of this circumstance termed the whole transaction *the breaking of bread*. 3. For our comfort, that we may know that the body of Christ was broken for us, as certainly as we see the bread broken. 4. That the doctrine of transubstantiation and consubstantiation may be rejected and abandoned.

“*Take, eat*: This command was addressed to the disciples and the whole Church of the New Testament, from which it appears, 1. That the Popish mass, in which the priest gives nothing to be received and eaten by the church, is not the Lord’s Supper, but a private supper to him that sacrifices, and a mere theatrical performance. 2. That we ought not to be idle spectators of the Supper, but ought to receive and eat it. 3. That the Lord’s Supper ought not to be celebrated, except where there are those to receive and partake of it. 4. That it is a sign of grace on the part of God, who exhibits unto us certain benefits which we are to receive by faith, as we take the signs with our hand and mouth.

“*This is my body which is broken for you*: If we wish to take this expression in its literal sense, its purport can only be: This, *i. e.*, this bread is my body which is broken and given unto death for you, which can mean nothing else but: The substance of this bread is

the substance of my body. But to understand the words in this sense would be absurd ; for bread is something destitute of life, which is baked of grain, and not personally united with the Word ; but the body of Christ is a living substance, born of the virgin Mary, and personally united with the Word. Christ, then, calls the bread His body, meaning thereby, that it is the sign of His body, attributing by a figure of speech the name of the thing signified to the sign ; because He appoints this bread as the sign and sacrament of His body, as Augustine interprets it when he says : *‘The Lord did not hesitate to say, This is my body, when He gave the sign of His body.’* Be it far from us, therefore, that we should say that Christ took bread visibly, and His body invisibly in the bread ; for He did not say, In this bread is my body ; or, This bread is my body invisibly ; but, This bread is my body, true and visible, which is offered for you.

“These, moreover, are the words of the promise added to this sacrament, for the purpose of teaching us that the bread in this use is the body of Christ, which is exhibited and given to those who partake of it and believe in this promise ; or, it is the flesh of Christ which He promised that He would give for the life of the world. For this is the same promise which Christ had made before in the sixth chapter of John, where He says that His flesh shall quicken us, and that it shall contribute to the salvation of those who eat of it. Here He merely adds the sacramental rite, which clothes and seals the promise, as if He would say : I have promised in the gospel eternal life to all that eat my flesh and drink my blood ; now I confirm and seal with this external rite the promise which I have made, that henceforth all that believe this promise and eat this bread, may be fully persuaded and assured that they do truly eat my flesh, which is given for the life of the world, and that they have eternal life.

“By this promise the bread is made the sacrament of Christ’s body, and His body is made the thing signified by this sacrament; and these two, the sign and thing signified, are joined in the sacrament, not by any physical union, nor by any corporal or local existence of the one in the other, much less by a transubstantiation or change of the one into the other; but by a *sacramental union*, whose bond is this promise, which is added to the bread, requiring faith of those who use it, which union declares, seals and exhibits the things signified by the signs. From this it appears that these things in their lawful use are always exhibited and received conjointly, but not without faith, viewing and apprehending the thing promised and now present in the sacrament; yet not present or included in the sign, as in a vessel, but present in the promise, which is the better part, being the soul of the sacrament. For they want judgment who say that the body of Christ cannot be present in the sacrament, unless it be in or under the bread, as if the bread alone, without the promise, were the sacrament, or the principal part of it.

“*Which for you*: For my disciples; that is, for your salvation and that of the whole Church.

“*Is broken*: But the body of Christ, some one may say, was not broken, nor is it now broken. To this we reply, that the Apostle in this passage has respect to the signification of the breaking of the bread, which denotes the rending of Christ’s body. For, as the bread is broken in pieces, so the body and soul of Christ were torn from each other upon the cross. The property of the sign is, therefore, by a sacramental metonymy, attributed to the thing signified.

“*This do*: This is a command for the observance of this sacrament. *This* which you see me do, do ye also hereafter in my Church; when congregated take bread, give thanks, break, distribute, eat, etc. He compre-

hends and gives command in reference to the whole transaction; and that to us who believe; not to the Jews who were about to crucify Him.

“In remembrance of me : That is, meditating upon my benefits which I have bestowed upon you, and which this sacrament calls to your remembrance; feeling also in your hearts that I give you these my gifts, and celebrating them by public confession in the sight of God, angels and men, and so giving thanks for them. The design of the Lord’s Supper is, therefore, a remembrance of Christ, which does not consist merely in meditating upon His history, but is a remembrance of His death and benefits, including faith, by which we appropriate to ourselves Christ and His merits, and gratitude or a public confession of the benefits of Christ. The parts of this remembrance, which is, as it were, the whole supper, are faith and gratitude, from which it appears that it was instituted to be a memorial of Christ, calling to our recollection what and how great benefits He hath purchased for us, and with what and how great sufferings He has obtained them, confirming in us at the same time the faith by which we receive these gifts. It does not, therefore, follow that because Christ has instituted the supper to His remembrance, that it is not for the confirmation of our faith any more than if I were to say the supper does not confirm our faith, because the Holy Ghost does. It is no proper consequence to infer the denial of an instrumental cause from the fact that we give prominence to the chief cause, no more than the denial of a part follows from a statement of the whole of which it is a part. Remembrance of Christ comprehends the remembrance of His benefits, together with faith and the giving of thanks; for Christ, by the use of these signs, admonishes us of Himself and of His benefits, and stirs up and establishes our confidence in Him, from which it naturally

follows that we also publicly express our gratitude to him. Hence this supper ought not only to admonish us of our duty, as some will have it, but it should first remind us of Christ's benefit, and then of our duty; for where there is no benefit, there cannot be any gratitude.

“Drink ye all of this: This command condemns the conduct of the Pope, who refused the laity the cup, and is likewise opposed to the sophistical figment of the concomitance of the blood with the body of Christ under the form of bread. Christ commanded all to eat and to drink. The Pope, however, will not allow the wine to any but the priests, giving nothing more than the bread to the laity, affirming that they drink in eating the bread. This shameful conduct is condemned by this command of Christ: “Drink ye all of this.” That the argument of the Pope in justification of his course is a mere sophism, when he affirms that this command had reference merely to the disciples who were present at the time, who were not laymen, but priests, is evident, 1. Because by this argument they foolishly make the disciples mass-mumming priests. 2. Because the Scriptures do not recognize the distinction which they make between the priests and laity. All the faithful are called priests in the Scriptures. “And hath made us kings and priests unto God, and his Father.” “Ye are a royal priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” (Rev. 1: 6, 1 Pet. 2: 9, 5.) 3. Because by the same pretext the whole supper might be taken away from the laity, especially from females, if it were true that none are to be admitted to this sacrament but that class of persons present at its institution. *The figment of concomitance* is a wicked pretext, which Christ refutes when He calls the bread by itself, His body, and the cup by itself, His blood, and gave both

separately to the disciples, to be eaten and drunk, and commanded them henceforth to administer them in the same way.

“This cup is the New Testament : Or, the covenant according to the Greek word *Diatheke*, which corresponds with the Hebrew *Berith*. It is called the *new* covenant, which means the renewed, or fulfilled covenant. The new covenant consists in our reconciliation with God, and communion with Christ and all His benefits by faith in His sacrifice already offered, without the observance of the ceremonies of the old Passover. *The supper* is called the new covenant with reference to its signification, because it is the sign and seal of this covenant, sealing unto us our reconciliation with God, and our union with Christ by faith. Christ, in calling the supper the new covenant, comprehends both the promise and the condition expressed in the promise, which is repentance and faith on our part ; from which it follows that it was also instituted to bind us to a Christian life. The new covenant is here also opposed to the old, which was the Passover with its rites. The supper signifies Christ already offered ; the Passover signified Christ, who should be offered. Both, however, signify our union with Christ. From what has now been said, we may infer that the drinking of the blood of Christ is not corporal ; for the New Testament is only one, and includes also all the people of God who lived before the coming of Christ into the world.

“In my blood, which is shed for you for the remission of sins : The blood of Christ is His death. Hence in His blood, is the same thing as in, or on account of His death. The shedding of the blood of Christ is His merit, in view of which we receive the forgiveness of sin, when it is apprehended by faith.

“As often as ye eat this bread : The supper is, therefore, to be frequently celebrated, which we may also

establish from its design, which is to celebrate the Lord's death.

"Ye do shew the Lord's death : Believe that Christ died, and that for you ; then profess His death publicly before all.

"Until He come : This supper is, therefore, to be perpetuated unto the end of the world, nor is any other external form of worship to be expected.

"The words of the institution, which we have now explained, may be more fully illustrated by the words of the apostle : "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" (1 Cor. 10 : 16.)

"The cup of blessing : It is called the cup of blessing, or thanksgiving, because it is received for this end, that we may call to mind the benefits of Christ, and so render thanks to Him for His sufferings and death.

"The communion of the blood of Christ : Communion is a participation in the thing which is common. The communion of the body and blood of Christ is, therefore, to be made through faith partakers of Christ and all His benefits, by the same Spirit dwelling both in Christ and in us, and effecting the same things in us which He does in Christ : or, it is the spiritual fellowship which the faithful have with Christ, as members with the head, and as branches with the vine. The bread and vine are the communion, that is, they are the sign and testimony of our communion with Christ. This communion, as the apostle briefly expresses it, consists in this, that we, being many, are one body ; from which it is easy to see that this our communion with Christ is no corporal eating ; for it is effected only by faith and the Holy Ghost. Christ is the head, and we are the members ; all who are members have communion in all the benefits of Christ. The head and

benefits are both common : hence we are all members in common and so have mutual love one to another."

2. Olevianus. "Let us see how the holy supper directs our hearts and confidence to the Savior.

"First, that Christ, by means of the holy supper, would direct our hearts to His bitter sufferings, may easily be inferred from the fact that He instituted the holy sacrament immediately before that suffering, viz., in the night when He was betrayed, and instead of the passover, which pointed to the sufferings of Christ yet to come, as the holy supper points to the same now accomplished. It may also be proved by the outward signs of the sacrament which Christ instituted, and by the words of the supper.

"In the first place, the breaking of the bread is a certain and holy sign that the body of Jesus Christ was broken for us, *i. e.*, was tortured with great pain and separated from His soul.

"Secondly, the institution of the holy wine as a special memorial of His blood, beside the bread, also visibly represents His death, viz., that upon the cross His blood was as truly separated from the body and shed for the forgiveness of sins, as Christ instituted the holy wine beside the breaking of bread.

"Thirdly, if you view rightly the words of institution, you will see that the Lord Jesus wishes to direct your heart and confidence to His bitter suffering. For Christ does not say simply : 'This is my body,' as some claim, but adds, 'which is offered for you.' Neither does He simply say : 'This is my blood,' but adds, 'which is shed for you for the remission of sins.'

"Christ might well have said : this is my body which is born of the Virgin Mary, or this is my body which is to be glorified. But He would not thus speak, but as follows : this is my body which is given unto you, viz., unto death ; in order that He might direct

our hearts and confidence to His suffering and death as the only ground and foundation of our salvation, so that it becomes to our hungering and thirsting souls the true food and drink unto eternal life, as Christ elsewhere teaches (John 6) when He says, the bread which I give is my flesh, which I give for the life of the world.

“Finally, the apostle proves it clearly in the words in which He cites the chief reasons why we should keep the holy supper. For, He says, as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord, ye do show the Lord’s death until He come. 1 Cor. 11. To proclaim the death of the Lord means to trust in your heart, and outwardly by the reception of the holy supper to testify and to confess before God, His holy angels and men, that by no other means than through the bitter death of Jesus Christ all your sins are already forgiven, and that God will not remember them forever, that you have been accepted as a member of the Lord Jesus Christ by the Holy Ghost, and that you are preserved as such and are an heir of eternal life, all of which Christ has secured for you by His death, and has promised to you through the Holy Ghost, and by this outward memorial repeats and confirms it. But you, on the other hand, publicly acknowledge that you received this gift and are still receiving it by true faith, and will never think of surrendering it, and with heartfelt joy you will offer to Christ for His bitter death, whence all these benefits flow, praise, honor and thanksgiving.”

II. The Celebration of the Supper.

1. Since by the one sacrifice of Christ upon the cross all sacrifices have been fulfilled and the sacrificial service has been abolished, so also the altar as the place of offering has been superseded in the Christian Church,

even as the oldest church knew no altars. The Reformed Church, therefore, celebrates the holy supper at the table of the Lord, even as Christ Himself instituted and observed it at a table.

2. In the Reformed Church two forms are common, sitting and standing. The former, at which the communicants alternately, commonly twelve at a time, sit down at tables or remain in their seats, and pass bread and wine to each other, while the minister speaks a few words, corresponds most nearly to the first communion. Yet the other form is not to be rejected, according to which the communicants in numbers of two or more go to the table or surround the same, in order to receive the gifts of the Lord. On the other hand, the Reformed Church unanimously rejects kneeling at the reception, which would be in place in the Romish sacrificial service, but not in an Evangelical celebration of the communion. At the first communion the disciples did not kneel down, but sat (reclined, according to the custom of that time) around the table.

3. We use at the supper ordinary wheat bread, and not consecrated wafers, just as Christ at the institution took of the bread at hand upon the table, which, however, in the case of the Lord's Supper, need not be unleavened, since this provision was in force only for the passover and came to an end with the same. Even the oldest churches made use of the ordinary leavened bread in the communion. Consecrated wafers signify "offerings," and in the Romish and the Lutheran Churches are not broken, but are offered entire to the communicants.

4. We, on the contrary, break the bread, because the Scriptures themselves lay stress upon this as a significant act. The Lord Himself brake it. The Apostle Paul speaks of the bread "which we break;" from this the Lord's Supper received its name "breaking of

bread" (Acts 2 : 42), and the oldest churches celebrated it in this way.

5. In like manner we set great value upon this, that the bread and the cup are given into the hands of the communicants, as also the Lord did when He said expressly : "Take." We reject the practice of placing the bread into the mouth and of holding the cup to the lips of the communicants as a sign of priestly assumption, from which this custom arose.

6. The consecration of the elements does not consist for us in a special act or prayer of consecration, but in the reading of the words of institution, whereby bread and wine are withdrawn from ordinary use and are set apart for holy use in the supper.

7. In the different Reformed churches, after reading the words of institution, no special form of distribution is used. The words adopted, upon the advice of Melancthon, by the Elector Frederick II. of the Palatinate and by the Palatinate Directory of Worship of 1563, formerly extensively used in the Reformed German churches, are the words of promise at the close of Question 77 : "The bread, which we break, is the communion of the body of Christ." "The cup of blessing, which we bless, is the communion of the blood of Christ."

8. How often shall the communion be celebrated? This is a question which concerns the Church on the one hand and the individual believer on the other.

a) From Geneva the custom of celebrating the Lord's Supper four times during the year has spread in the Reformed Church. Calvin was not in accord with the practice, but preferred a monthly celebration. In several of the Reformed churches of Germany (as in Lippe) it is celebrated every month during the winter and less frequently during the summer.

b) As to how often we should partake of the Lord's Supper, Calvin expresses himself in his "Treatise on the Lord's Supper" as follows: "With reference to the number of times that the Lord's Supper is to be partaken of, no fixed regulation can be adopted. For in the case of every one there are frequent special hindrances, which excuse him if he absents himself. Besides, we have no express command which obligates all Christians to partake of it every time when it is offered to them. In all cases, if we keep its object rightly in view, we will recognize that its use ought to be more frequent than is commonly the practice. For the more our weakness makes itself felt in us, the more frequently must we practice that which may and will serve for the confirmation of our faith and our furtherance in a holy life. Therefore in all well regulated churches the custom is to be insisted on that the supper should be celebrated as frequently as the circumstances of the congregation may allow. And every individual member, as far as he is able, should be ready to partake of it as often as it is celebrated in the congregation, and only very weighty reasons should keep him from the same. Although we have no definite command, fixing a time or designating a day, it must be sufficient for us to know that it is within the purpose of the Lord that we should partake of it often, otherwise we lose the benefit which arises from it.

The excuses which some, on the other hand, advance, are entirely untenable. Some say that they are unworthy, and under this pretext abstain from the communion throughout the entire year. Others do not concentrate their attention upon their own worthiness, but pretend that they cannot commune with many whom they see coming to the table without the proper preparation. Still others consider frequent communion superfluous on the ground that having once accepted

Christ, communion with Him does not require repeated renewal. The first who excuse themselves on the ground of their unworthiness, I would ask how their consciences can endure to continue an entire year or more in so miserable a state, without venturing to call earnestly upon God? For they must grant that it is presumption to call upon God as our Father, when we are not members of Jesus Christ, and the latter relation does not exist as long as that which is offered to us in the communion has not really and truly taken possession of us. But when we have the substance (Christ Himself), are we not worthy to receive the sign? We, therefore, see that he who would absent himself from the enjoyment of the holy supper, is also unworthy of the privilege of praying unto God. Besides, I do not wish to do violence to the consciences of those who are disquieted by any scruples whatsoever, though they may not be clear to themselves. Rather do I advise them in such cases to wait until the Lord Himself frees them from such scruples. So also I would not condemn a postponement of communing where any other valid hindrance arises. I only desire to show that no one can rest easy for any length of time by absenting himself from the Lord's Supper on account of his unworthiness. For thereby he deprives himself of the communion of the Church, in which rests all our happiness. Rather let him struggle determinately against all the obstacles which the devil puts in his pathway, that he may not exclude himself from so great a blessing and all that it brings with itself. The others have a certain show of excuse for themselves when they reason as follows: If it is not proper to join in an ordinary meal with those who, though called our brethren, yet live a disorderly and scandalous life, how much more ought we to hesitate to eat in common with them the bread of the Lord, which has

been sanctified to this end that it may represent and convey to us the body of Christ? But it is not difficult to answer this objection. It is indeed not within the province of every single member to judge or decide who should be admitted or excluded. This is rather a prerogative of the entire Church, or of the pastors with the elders, who are his co-adjutors in the government of the congregation. The Apostle Paul does not ask that one should examine others, but that each one should examine himself. It is indeed our duty to admonish those whom we see leading disorderly lives; and if they do not wish to hear us, to notify the pastor, in order that he may interpose with his ecclesiastical authority. But it is not the right way for us to withdraw from the society of the vicious by giving up the communion of the Church. Besides, it will often happen that the offences are not so public as to justify exclusion from the Lord's Supper. For however much even a pastor might consider in his heart one unworthy, in no case can he point him out as such publicly and send him back from the communion, when he cannot appeal to a decision of the Church authorities (presbyterium). In such a case we have no other recourse than to pray to God that He might deliver His Church more and more from all offences, and to await the last day, when the chaff will be fully separated from the wheat. In behalf of the third objection not even the shadow of a reason can be given. For it is not possible to be surfeited by this spiritual bread, which was given us in order that after having tasted its sweetness, we might desire it more and more, and enjoy it as often as it is offered to us. For as long as we tarry in this mortal life, Christ is never imparted to us in such a manner that our souls are satisfied once for all by Him, but He will be our constant support."

Question 78.

Do then the bread and wine become the very body and blood of Christ?

Not at all; but as the water in baptism is not changed into the blood of Christ, neither is the washing away of sin itself, being only the sign and confirmation thereof appointed of God; so the bread of the Lord's supper is not changed into the very body of Christ, though, agreeably to the nature and properties of sacraments, it is called the body of Christ Jesus.

1. As Ursinus remarks, this question is not only directed against transubstantiation, *i. e.*, against the doctrine, according to which bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ, but also against consubstantiation, *i. e.*, the doctrine that the "true," *i. e.*, the essential body of Christ is present "in and under the form of bread," and that the "true," *i. e.*, the essential blood of Christ is present "in and under the form of wine" after consecration. Both these teachings (the Romish and the Lutheran) have this in common, that a change takes place in relation to the bread and wine, while the Reformed Church teaches that the bread and wine are distinguished from other bread and wine only by their holy use, and remain bread and wine unchanged.

2. The Romish and the Lutheran Church make an unfair appeal in this matter to the words: "This is." Christ did not say: "This bread is my body; this wine is my blood;" also not: "In and under this bread is my body; in and under this wine is my blood." The words mean much more: "This is my body;—which is offered (or broken) for you; this cup is the New Testament (the new covenant) in my blood;—which is shed for you." He points not merely to bread and wine, but at the same time also to that which He intended thereby. His body was seated before His disciples and His blood coursed

through the veins of His body. Therefore neither could the bread which He brake, nor the wine which He poured into the cup, have been changed into His body and blood (into the material or substance of His body and blood), nor could both have been present, in and under bread and wine. He says rather that His body is offered for them unto death and His blood shed for them in His death; and the Apostle Paul says, that as often as we eat "this bread" and drink "this cup," we proclaim the death of the Lord. This cannot be interpreted in any other way than that the Lord wished to give His disciples in the breaking of the bread and the pouring out of the wine into the cup chiefly a symbolization of His violent death, which was still impending over Him, in connection with which, however, no change took place in bread and wine, nor needed to take place. But then the Lord emphasizes at the same time the words "for you," that His death was for their benefit, in that He would thereby secure for them the "forgiveness of sins." This could, however, be imparted to them only if they stood by their fellowship with Him through faith and continued therein. He calls that eating His body and drinking His blood, which can take place only spiritually, and not that which takes place bodily in the eating of the natural bread and wine.

3. Both sacraments point to "that one sacrifice of Christ which He offered for us on the cross," and by them the Holy Ghost confirms in believers the communion of the death and of the life of Christ. As the water in baptism is not transformed into the blood of Christ, nor includes the blood of Christ, so bread and wine in the supper are not transformed into the body and blood of Christ, nor do they include them. And as baptism is called the washing away of sins, in the same sense also in the supper the bread is called

the body of Christ and the cup the testament in His blood.

4. This takes place after the manner and usage of sacraments, inasmuch as the name of the thing is therein attributed to the sign, without any change taking place in the sign, either by transformation or inclusion, but because the thing itself is to be represented by the sign in accordance with the similarity existing between the two, and its reception to be sealed thereby. That the bread remains bread and the wine wine without change, appears also from the fact that St. Paul calls bread "bread," even in its sacred use. 1 Cor. 10: 16.

5. The following review may make this clear :

Circumcision is called the covenant of God, because it was a sign of this covenant. Baptism is called regeneration and the washing away of sins, because it reminds and assures us of the same. The paschal lamb is called the passover, because it was to be a sign that the Lord was to pass by the houses marked with the blood of the lamb. Bread and wine are called the body and blood of Christ, because they are received in remembrance of the body and blood of Christ.

6. The words of the Apostle Paul, "that he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, because he does not discern the body of the Lord," are quoted in support of the interpretation that the "real" body of Christ is present in the supper, and is received and eaten also by unbelievers. But if, as has been proved, in the holy supper only a spiritual eating of the body and blood of Christ is referred to, this can take place only in the case of those who possess the organ for the reception of spiritual gifts, and that is faith only. The unbeliever brings a guilt, a condemnation upon himself, because he does not discern the body of the Lord, *i. e.*, does not

distinguish the holy supper from an ordinary meal, and thereby slights or abuses that which is holy.

Question 79.

Why then doth Christ call the bread his body, and the cup his blood, or the new covenant in his blood; and Paul the "communion of the body and blood of Christ?"

Christ speaks thus not without great reason. namely, not only thereby to teach us that as bread and wine support this temporal life, so his crucified body and shed blood are the true meat and drink whereby our souls are fed to eternal life; but more especially by these visible signs and pledges to assure us that we are as really partakers of his true body and blood (by the operation of the Holy Ghost), as we receive by the mouths of our bodies these holy signs in remembrance of him; and that all his sufferings and obedience are as certainly ours, as if we had in our own persons suffered and made satisfaction for our sins to God.

1. Bread and wine are the choicest aliments for the preservation and strengthening of the temporal life. In like manner the crucified body of Christ and His shed blood are the true food and drink of the soul unto eternal life. Christ wished to teach us this first of all when He called the bread His body and the cup His blood, and Paul, when he applied these to the communion of the body and blood of Christ. Ps. 104: 14, 15, John 6: 55, 56, 49, 51.

2. When Christ calls the bread His body and the cup His blood, He wishes further not only to teach us by these signs, but He also makes use of them as pledges and seals, by which He would assure us:

a) That we truly become partakers of His body and blood, not by the eating of the pledges, the bread and the wine, but by the operation of the Holy Ghost. 1 Cor. 10: 16.

b) That the merit which He secured for us by the offering of His body and blood unto death is assuredly our own. 1 Cor. 11: 26.

Question 80.

What difference is there between the Lord's Supper and the Popish mass?

The Lord's Supper testifies to us that we have a full pardon of all sin by the only sacrifice of Jesus Christ, which he himself has once accomplished on the cross; and that we by the Holy Ghost are ingrafted into Christ, who, according to his human nature, is now not on earth, but in heaven, at the right hand of God his father, and will there be worshipped by us:—but the mass teaches that the living and the dead have not the pardon of sins, through the sufferings of Christ, unless Christ is also daily offered for them by the priests; and further, that Christ is bodily under the form of bread and wine, and therefore is to be worshipped in them; so that the mass, at bottom, is nothing else than a denial of the one sacrifice and sufferings of Jesus Christ, and an accursed idolatry.

The word mass comes from the Latin *missa*, a word which was used in the ancient Church, when the service, at which the unbaptized were also permitted to be present, was ended, and the celebration of the holy supper was to begin, and at the pronouncement of which the former departed. It means the same as: The congregation is dismissed.

1. The Romish mass is a mutilation of the Lord's Supper, as it is celebrated by the priest only, without the participation of others.

2. It is a denial of the only sacrifice of Christ on the cross, because it is to be a continual, *i. e.*, a daily offered bloodless sacrifice of Christ, and thereby a repetition of the bloody sacrifice of Christ.

3. Simple attendance upon the mass is said to be sufficient for the forgiveness of sins, while Christ demands repentance and conversion of the heart.

4. The mass is said to bring this benefit not only to the living, but also to the dead, for whom one is to have performed the so-called masses for departed souls, for which the priest is paid a fixed fee.

5. But the most shocking part is, that as soon as the wafer has been consecrated by the priest, the congregation falls upon its knees, offering to it the divine honor of adoration, on the ground that the same has now been transformed into the body of Christ, and that Christ is bodily present in the receptacle in which the host is preserved. Especially on this account is the mass called an "idolatry." And with what fanaticism the worship of the mass and its errors fills the hearts and heads of those who believe in it, may be seen in connection with the chief festival of the mass, that of Corpus Christi, when those of a different faith are compelled to uncover their heads before the consecrated wafer, and that often in the most violent manner. An evangelical Christian who does this, becomes thereby a participant of the sins of others. 1 John 5 : 21, 1 Cor. 10 : 14.

6. The Word of God opposes in the clearest manner such a misrepresentation of the sacrifice of Christ and of the holy supper as takes place in the teaching concerning the mass. Heb. 10 : 10, 12, 14 ; 8 : 1.

7. In support of the concluding sentence of the 80th Question, the two following verses are cited in the oldest editions of the Catechism. Dan. 11 : 38, 39, "But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces ; and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory ; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain." Dent. 27 : 15, "Cursed be the man that maketh any graven or molten image, an abomination unto the Lord, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and putteth it in a secret place. And all the people shall answer and say, Amen."

8. Objection has been brought against the catechism, that in the last sentence of the 80th Question too severe expressions are used. In the Smalkald Articles (Part 2, Article 2) Luther speaks of the "mass of the papacy" as "the greatest and most monstrous abomination" and "the extreme of all papal idolatries." "Above all these has this dragon's tail, the mass, produced a horde of pests and manifold idolatries." (For the understanding of "dragon's tail," refer to Rev. 12: 3, 4, and 20: 2.) "Therefore we are and shall forever remain separate and opposed to each other. They know well that where the mass is dropped, the papacy falls; and before they will allow that, they will kill us all wherever it is possible." (This was apropos not only to those times.) What Luther says here in the Smalkald Articles, a confession of the Lutheran Church, in reference to the mass, is in substance the same as the statements in the Heidelberg Catechism, but the expressions are unquestionably much stronger than they are in the latter.

Question 81.

For whom is the Lord's Supper instituted?

For those who are truly sorrowful for their sins, and yet trust that these are forgiven them for the sake of Christ; and that their remaining infirmities are covered by his passion and death; and who also earnestly desire to have their faith more and more strengthened, and their lives more holy; but hypocrites, and such as turn not to God with sincere hearts, eat and drink judgment to themselves.

Questions 81 and 82 belong together to the extent to which the first requires self-examination and the second Church discipline as a preparation for the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

I. Worthy Communicants.

1. Because the Lord's Supper is no mere external eating and drinking, there belongs to a worthy participation of the same an inner preparation.

2. The worthiness of the communicants does not consist in their own merits, but in the right condition of the inward man. 1 Cor. 11 : 28, "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." This means: Let him search his own heart and conscience, whether he is sorry for his sins, whether he believes on Christ, and whether he earnestly purposes to reform his life. 1 Cor. 11 : 26, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." This means: You are thereby to be reminded that Christ, on account of your sins, suffered death, and, therefore, ye are to hate sin; and that by His death He has paid for your sins, and that by the power of His death your old man is to be mortified.

3. The first thing necessary is that they be "truly sorrowful for their sins." This takes place when in childlike fear they learn to recognize not only their sins, while meditating upon the sum of the divine law (compare Question 4); but also their condemnation while reflecting upon the curse of the law (compare Questions 10 and 11). Ps. 51 : 17.

4. The second thing necessary is that in connection with this acknowledgment of their sins they "yet trust that these are forgiven them for the sake of Christ; and that their remaining infirmities are covered by His passion and death." Their sins consist in the transgressions and neglects of the divine commandments. The remaining infirmity is our inability to do the good, which fills us with pain. 1 John 1 : 7, 2 Cor. 13 : 5.

5. The third thing necessary is that they "also earnestly desire to have *a*) their faith more and more strengthened and *b*) their lives more holy."

a) Upon a sincere and strict self-examination, our faith, *i. e.*, our trust in the merits of Christ, is always found to be weak. It is strengthened by diligent

prayer to God for the Holy Ghost, and by the use of the means through which God produces and confirms faith, viz., by hearing, reading and meditating upon the divine word and by the use of the holy supper (compare Question 65). Luke 17 : 5.

b) The forgiveness of sins assured to us in the holy supper is to incite us more and more to renounce and resist sin, by making our lives, *i. e.*, our conduct, holy. 2 Tim. 2 : 19.

II. Unworthy Communicants.

1. The impenitent are those who do not heartily wish to repent and be converted. Rom. 2 : 5.

2. Hypocrites are those who have only the appearance of being converted, and thereby deceive themselves and others, as well as those who sometimes wish to side with Christ and at other times with the world. 1 Cor. 10 : 21.

3. The Apostle Paul, 1 Cor. 11, rebukes especially uncharitableness, by which the Church makes itself guilty of an unworthy communion of the holy supper, and which manifests itself in discord, in selfishness and in the despising of others. 1 Cor. 11 : 16–22.

4. The unworthy eating of the Lord's Supper is followed by a judgment of God. 1 Cor. 11 : 29 : "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself (a judgment or sentence of God), because he does not discern the Lord's body (because he treats slightly, like ordinary bread, the consecrated bread which is offered to him as a divine token and seal of the crucified body of Christ, and, therefore, called by Paul the body of Christ). But by judgment is, however, not to be understood eternal damnation, as is to be seen from the following : v. 30–32, "For this cause (on account of the unworthy eating occurring in the congregation) many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would

judge ourselves (in self-examination), we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world, but might yet be brought to sincere repentance of heart.

5. As a guide to self-examination, preparatory services are held in the Reformed Church, a divine service preceding the communion, generally on the day before. Yet it is well to take into consideration preparation several days before, and also after the communion especially to thankfully remember the same.* The preparatory service as a Church regulation appears already in the first edition of the Palatinate Directory of Worship (1563).

6. In the celebration of the holy supper we are to appear

a) With outward propriety, in that, as is becoming in divine service, we avoid negligence as well as extravagance in dress, and during the celebration do not allow ourselves to be distracted;

b) With inner devoutness, in that we fix our hearts wholly upon the Lord Jesus and reflect upon the exalted blessings which are secured by Him, and which are confirmed and sealed unto us at His table. Let it be insisted on that, according to the old custom of our Reformed Church, the communicants appear in simple black, or at least in dark clothing, and that bright garments be avoided. It was always touching and edifying to me when in the early Reformed country congregations of my Palatinate home the women came to the Lord's table dressed in black and wearing a plain white hood, and the men in dark clothing, wearing a long, single-breasted coat, with a staff under the left arm and

* See the meditations and prayers in my hand-book for communicants, "The Communion Table. A Hand-Book for the Children of God." Bielefeld and Leipzig, Belhagen and Klasing, 1868.

the hymn book in the hand. It reminded me of the first Passover which Israel ate, Ex. 12: 11, prepared to be eaten as "in haste."

Question 82.

Are they also to be admitted to this supper, who, by confession and life, declare themselves infidels and ungodly?

No; for by this the covenant of God would be profaned, and his wrath kindled against the whole congregation; therefore it is the duty of the Christian Church, according to the appointment of Christ and his apostles, to exclude such persons by the keys of the kingdom of heaven, until they show amendment of life.

1. In view of the idea of self-discipline being associated with self-examination, hypocrites and unbelievers, whose true character cannot be discerned, are to be warned to absent themselves from the holy supper. On the contrary, by the discipline of the Church those members of the congregation who show themselves to be skeptical in their faith and ungodly in their lives, are to be excluded from the communion in a regular way by Church discipline.

2. These are excluded, in that they are forbidden to participate in the Lord's Supper; and if they still persist, they are not allowed to do so. 1 Cor. 5: 11. Matt. 7: 6, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." "That which is holy" and "the pearls" are God's holy word of grace and the holy sacraments entrusted to the Church; the impure and malicious are compared to dogs and swine, which, according to the law, were impure animals.

3. By the exclusion of unbelievers and the wicked, two evils are to be averted.

a) That the covenant of God may not be profaned. The covenant of God relates not only to the individual,

but also to the congregation as a whole, and the Lord's Supper is the covenant meal. Ps. 50 : 16.

b) That His wrath may not be kindled against the whole congregation, when it tolerates laxity of discipline in faith and practice. 1 Cor. 11 : 30, "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." Weak and sickly may be understood either bodily or spiritually, or in both senses. "To sleep" in the former sense is equivalent to being dead, in the latter without living faith. Compare 1 Cor. 10 : 1-5.

4. Exclusion is based upon the "regulation of Christ and His Apostles."

a) The regulation of Christ. Matt. 18 : 15-17.

b) The regulation of the Apostles. Tit. 3 : 10, 2 Thess. 3 : 6, 14, 15.

5. Exclusion from the supper is only for a time, *i. e.*, until the excluded one gives evidence of a better life. 2 Cor. 2 : 6.

6. Exclusion takes place only through the appointed officers of the Church. Matt. 16 : 19.

OF THE POWER OF THE KEYS.

Question 83.

What are the keys of the kingdom of heaven?

The preaching of the holy gospel, and Christian discipline, or the excommunication out of the Christian Church; by these two, the kingdom of heaven is opened to believers, and shut against unbelievers.

1. Christian discipline is not to be limited to the communion only, but extends further, and is exercised by the preaching of the Gospel and by the exclusion from the communion of the Church, either for a time or permanently (the lesser or the greater ban).

2. "The office of the keys." This designation is figurative, and is based upon the practice in connection

with the installation of earthly stewards or administrators who are entrusted with keys as a sign of the authority with which they are invested. The office of "the keys" in the Church rests upon the commission and authority which Christ gave first to Peter (Matt. 16 : 19), and in like manner to all the Apostles (Matt. 18 : 18, John 20 : 23), and thereby also to their successors in the office, in the government of the Church and congregation. Matt. 16 : 19 ; 18 : 18, John 20 : 22, 23.

3. The means of Church discipline can be only of a spiritual, and not of a civil character. 2 Cor. 10 : 4-6.

Question 84.

How is the kingdom of heaven opened and shut by the preaching of the holy gospel?

Thus : when, according to the command of Christ, it is declared and publicly testified to all and every believer, that whenever they receive the promise of the gospel by a true faith, all their sins are really forgiven them of God, for the sake of Christ's merits ; and, on the contrary, when it is declared and testified to all unbelievers, and such as do not sincerely repent, that they stand exposed to the wrath of God and eternal condemnation, so long as they are unconverted ; according to which testimony of the gospel God will judge them, both in this and the life to come.

I. The Opening of the Kingdom of Heaven Through Preaching.

The kingdom of heaven is opened and closed, not by the preaching of the law, but by the preaching of the Gospel, the proclamation of redemption through Jesus Christ and an invitation believingly to accept the same. "To all and every believer," *i. e.*, not merely all in general ("to all"), but every individual ("every") believer is assured of the forgiveness of sins upon the basis of the merits of Christ as certainly as if he heard the statement from the very mouth of God. Ezek. 33 : 11, John 6 : 37, Luke 10 : 16.

II. The Closing of the Kingdom of Heaven Through Preaching.

Upon those who do not believe the Gospel when it is preached to them, eternal damnation will be visited as certainly as if they heard the very voice of God in the sermon. The announcement of the judgment of God in the sermon is to serve the purpose of securing their repentance and escape from the wrath of God. John 8 : 24, Matt. 3 : 7, 8.

III. The Confirmation of the Gospel.

The great day will make it clear that the opening and closing of the kingdom of heaven through the preaching of the Gospel is effectual not only for this life, but also for eternity. Rom. 2 : 16, Matt. 18 : 18.

Question 85.

How is the kingdom of heaven shut and opened by Christian discipline?

Thus : when, according to the command of Christ, those who, under the name of Christians, maintain doctrines or practices inconsistent therewith, will not, after having been often brotherly admonished, renounce their errors and wicked course of life, are complained of to the Church, or to those who are thereunto appointed by the Church ; and if they despise their admonition, are, by them, forbid the use of the sacraments ; whereby they are excluded from the Christian Church, and by God himself from the kingdom of Christ ; and when they promise and show real amendment, are again received as members of Christ and his Church.

1. "Christian discipline" is elsewhere spoken of also as Church discipline. The name already indicates that it was not intended as an opportunity for the exhibition of the authority of the Church, but is intended as a last resort to bring to repentance by means of exclusion erring members of the Church who are no longer benefited by the Word, and thus it serves the purpose of spiritual discipline.

2. The Reformed Church lays great stress upon the administration of Church discipline, and the prosper-

ous condition of her congregations in earlier times is largely to be attributed to this fact. She reckons among the marks of the true Church not only that God's Word is purely preached and that the sacraments are administered in accordance with their institution, but also that a godly life is insisted upon, to the preservation and furtherance of which Christian discipline contributes. (Catechumens ought to be reminded that with their admission to the holy supper they take upon themselves the obligation to submit to Christian discipline.)

3. Those "appointed by the Church" for the administration of discipline are the minister and elders of the congregation.

4. Where, after a long neglect, Church discipline is again to be restored, it is necessary to act prudently, and what the condition of each particular congregation will warrant is to be considered no less than that everything is to tend to the edification and improvement of the same," as the Church Directory of Lippe of 1684 advises, notwithstanding its provision for the strictest Reformed Church discipline, even to the point of public repentance before the congregation. In this connection the directions of Christ recorded in Luke 14: 28-30 should be earnestly considered.

5. Calvin. "If no society, not even a house with ever so small a family, can be kept in good order without discipline, so much the more is discipline necessary in the Church, whose condition is to be regulated in the best possible way. As the saving doctrine of Christ is the soul of the Church, so Church discipline represents the nerves and sinews of the same. By these the members of the body, each in its place, are connected and brought into accord with each other. Whoever, therefore, desires that Church discipline be abolished, or hinders its restoration, whether he do it con-

sciously or unwittingly, follows the surest path to bring about the complete dissolution of the Church. For what will be the result, if every one does as he pleases? This would certainly be the outcome if the preaching of the Gospel were not supplemented by personal admonition and punishment, and by the use of other means which aid the preaching and render it effective. Church discipline is, therefore, as it were, a check to curb and restrain those who would oppose the doctrine of Christ, or a goad to urge on those who lack earnestness of purpose; in other instances a fatherly rod, by which, after the manner of the Spirit of Christ, those who have grossly sinned are kindly chastised. When we see in the Church the beginnings of threatened insubordination, the very exigency of the situation demands a remedy, because in the face of this evil no progress can be made in the Church. And the only remedy is that which was ordained by Christ Himself, and which has been continually practiced by His people, viz., Church discipline.

6. According to Calvin there are three grades or degrees of Church discipline indicated in Question 85, which are to be applied in their order, but in serious cases the higher without delay: 1. Brotherly admonition; 2. Admonition by those who are ordained for this purpose, the presbytery; 3. Exclusion from the Lord's Supper.

7. The purpose of Church discipline is, according to Calvin, three-fold: 1. That the name of God and His Church may not be disgraced by the toleration of disorderly and scandalous conduct; 2. To deter others, since a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump; 3. For the improvement of the sinner in accordance with 1 Cor. 5: 3-5, where the Apostle delivers the fornicator unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

8. To this discipline of the Church, says Calvin, there are no exceptions, so that even princes, as well as their humblest subjects, must submit themselves to it. For it is exercised at the command of Christ, to whom the sceptres and crowns of kings must bow.

Examples of Church discipline of those in high station :

1. When the Roman Emperor Theodosius the Great, who had ordered that 7,000 of the inhabitants of Thessalonica, most of them innocent, be massacred in punishment for revolt, wished soon thereafter to attend a religious service in Milan, Bishop Ambrose forbade him to enter the Church, upbraiding him at the same time with his sins. Theodosius thereupon laid aside all tokens of his regal dignity, confessed in the Church before the congregation his sin and begged with tears for forgiveness.

2. One of the most prominent men in Geneva and leader of the libertines, Berthelier, had been excluded from the communion by the consistory on account of his impious addresses and scandalous life. Upon his complaint the magistrate, the highest authority in the State, declared this judgment void. Relying upon this decision, Berthelier and his confederates again presented themselves at the autumn communion (1553). But Calvin remained firm and closed the sermon preceding the communion with the words: "As far as I am concerned, ye know well that God has given me firm courage, after having implored the help of His grace; and as long as I am here I shall stand firm, however matters may turn out. There is no other rule for my conduct but that of my Master, and what He has prescribed to me is clear and certain to my mind. Chrysostom already taught that we should rather die than offer the holy emblems to those who have been declared unworthy of communion with the body of

Christ. Therefore if any should presume to approach this table who have been forbidden so to do by the consistory, I hereby declare in advance, though it be at the risk of my life, that I will do what I must and what I have been commanded to do." Thereupon none of those excluded attempted to commune, but they all left the Church.

Calvin's positive stand with reference to excommunication, which was the chief occasion of conflict in Geneva, and for a long time stirred the city to its depths, is indicated by his private and public utterances at the time. He writes to a friend: "It is true, there is considerable grumbling and dissatisfaction, especially among the youth, and here and there the poison which gathers in their hearts breaks out openly against us. But it all ends only in smoke. They have found more courage and determination in us (his colleagues and fellow presbyters) than they expected, and all their threatenings amount to no more than the vaporings of the proud Moabites, of which no one is afraid. Should matters even become worse, I shall not be astonished. Vastly worse rebellions were raised against Moses and the prophets, although they were the appointed rulers over God's people, and such trials are wholesome for us. Only pray to the Lord for us, that His grace may not depart from us, and that through His strength we may esteem obedience to Him better than life itself. O how much more must we be afraid to offend Him than to excite the rage of the wicked, and even though I at times fear that the courage of the weak and unfortified might fail by reason of their continual attacks, yet, on the other hand, I have the cheerful confidence that the Lord will calm the storms before that comes to pass. Hitherto, at least, He has given us the disposition to resist the evil, and has granted to those who stand by us steadfastness of purpose to

endure with us. Only one thing is needful, that the good Lord continue to protect and direct His work." In a sermon he exclaims, in the presence of his congregated enemies: "If I followed my inclination, I would pray to God to take me away from this world. I should not wish to live three days in the confusion which reigns here. And yet we would boast that we have established a Reformation! Not servants of God, but the blind might be our judges; for with their hands they could grasp our (those of Geneva) worthlessness. And why should I give way to considerations of self? I and all of us will not cease to do our duty in cleansing the home and the Church of everything that hinders the progress of the grace of God among us."

3. During a campaign of the Huguenot war of 1586-1589, King Henry of Navarre (later Henry IV. of France) betrayed a daughter of honorable Reformed parents of the city of Rochelle. Soon thereafter (Oct. 20, 1587) a battle was fought at Coutras. When the battle was to begin, and the king, as it was customary in the Huguenot army, was about to kneel down with his people for prayer, the chaplain, pastor Chandieu, who accompanied the troops, approached him and demanded that the king first publicly acknowledge his sin in the presence of his army, to whom his offence was known. Henry obeyed in tears. To escape the strict discipline of the Reformed Church and to rid himself of the censors, who had become so disagreeable to his carnal mind—it was these which no doubt contributed their share to make it easy for him afterwards to apostatize from the cause of the Gospel.

ON THE DOCTRINE OF THE SACRAMENTS.

Before the two tendencies in the Church of the Reformation, formally separated into a Lutheran and a Reformed Church by the adoption of the Formula of Concord on the part of the Lutherans, the Reformed made repeated efforts to come to an agreement with the other party. These attempts had reference mainly to the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, in regard to which there was the greatest difference; for as to the doctrine of predestination they agreed up to that time. The Elector Frederick the Pious labored unremittingly to bring about an agreement among his co-electors, and the authors of the Heidelberg Catechism followed the same course among theologians, governments and congregations in the German empire, even while they were compelled to defend themselves against attacks from the other side. Such an attempt at agreement we have in Olevianus's "Proposal how Doctor Luther's doctrine of the holy sacraments, as contained in his smaller catechism, may be brought, agreeably to God's Word, into harmony with that of the Reformed Church."

In the short preface which he addressed "to the Christian governments and congregations of the German nation," he directs attention to the fact that the persecutions, arising on every hand against the Gospel, appealed to them to come to an agreement, and he concludes by saying: "As for the rest, I acknowledge hereby boldly that I do not think of Doctor Luther otherwise than as a great servant of God, whom I also heartily love, and of whom I shall speak only with respect. Neither do I doubt that if the good, honest man were still living and were to see this meditation, he would be satisfied with it as in agreement with the Scriptures. He would also not take it amiss that we do that which in the preface to his books he himself

asked in the following words: 'Above all I pray the Christian reader, and pray for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ, that he read these my books with consideration and with judgment, yea even with much compassion and sympathy, and remembering that I formerly was a monk,' etc. These are Dr. Luther's blessed words. And now since God has graciously granted that in the school of suffering the persecuted Christians should be favored with further light, who would wantonly quench such light and force them not to acknowledge the same, since all gifts indeed are imparted to us for this very purpose, that without injury to anybody they may produce fruit to the honor of God and the edification of the Church. Faithfully recommending you all hereby to the same omnipotent God and Father."

PART THIRD.

OF THANKFULNESS.

The 86th Question, and with it the third part of the catechism, which treats of "thankfulness," points back to the first part, which treats of our misery, and to the second part, which treats of our deliverance ("freely given by God, merely of grace, only for the sake of Christ's merits"), and in the next place is connected with the section on justification by faith alone (Ques. 59-64), in order to show (in the third part) how must be constituted the life of faith as the fruit of justification and sanctification, as well as the manifestation of thankfulness. With justification sanctification is associated, for he that is justified is also sanctified, and it would not be in accord with the conception of our catechism to say that the third part treats only of our sanctification; although indeed it treats of our walk in

holiness, *i. e.*, of the holy life of believers, of the life and growth of those sanctified in Christ. Good works are the effects, consequences and marks of justification and sanctification, and to do good works means nothing else than to live according to the holy will of God and in His communion. Therefore only the regenerate can do really good works, and such are not difficult for them to do, because they have the power of the Holy Ghost. 1 John 5: 3, Matt. 11: 30. They are to do good works, not to merit anything by them, nor to effect thereby for themselves their sanctification, but out of thankfulness.

Ursinus. "True Christian thankfulness, therefore, which is here taught, is an acknowledgment and profession of our gracious deliverance, through Christ, from sin and death, and a sincere desire to avoid sin, and everything that might offend God, and to conform the life according to His will; to desire, expect and receive all good things from God alone, by a true faith, and to render thanks for the benefits received."

Thankfulness is shown: 1. In true repentance and a godly life according to the commands of God, and 2. In true supplication to God and believing prayer after the pattern of the Lord's Prayer. Therefore the third part of the Catechism is divided into two parts: 1. The Law, and 2. Prayer.

Question 86.

Since then we are delivered from our misery, merely of grace through Christ, without any merit of ours, why must we still do good works?

Because that Christ having redeemed and delivered us by his blood, also renews us by his Holy Spirit, after his own image; that so we may testify, by the whole of our conduct, our gratitude to God for his blessings, and that he may be praised by us; also, that every one may be assured in himself of his faith, by the fruits thereof; and that by our godly conversation others may be gained to Christ.

Why we Ought to do Good Works.

1. It is reasonable on account of the benefits we have received.

a) For Christ, by means of our justification and renewal (sanctification), has bestowed upon us the greatest benefits. He has not only redeemed us from our sins by His blood, thereby taking away from us our misery, but by the Holy Ghost has also renewed us after His own image, and has thus granted us in reality the power of a new life. 1 Cor. 1 : 30, 2 Cor. 5 : 17.

b) The purpose of our justification and sanctification in Christ is a life of good works. Eph. 2 : 10, Tit. 2 : 14.

c) Ursinus. "The benefits of justification are not given to us without the benefits of renewal (regeneration): 1. Because Christ purchased for us both the forgiveness of sins and the indwelling of God in us through the Holy Ghost. But the Holy Ghost is never inactive. He is always at work, transforming the persons in whom He dwells into the likeness of God. 2. Because by faith our hearts are cleansed. For those who by faith have received the merit of Christ, find awakened in them love toward God and a desire to show their gratitude toward Him. 3. Because God does not grant the benefits of justification to those who do not show themselves thankful. But no one shows himself thankful who has not received the favor of renewal (regeneration). Neither of the two can be separated from the other."

2. We owe it to God. For by His benefits He has brought us under obligation to thank Him.

a) We prove ourselves thankful to God when "the whole of our conduct" is made tributary to the service of God, *i. e.*, all that we are and have, what we think, do and speak, and that at all times. Heb. 12 : 28, Col. 3 : 17.

b) Everything in our conduct must have for its end the glory of God, and thus He will be "praised by us" through our good works, in that by them the grace and power of God bestowed upon us will be made manifest to others. 1 Cor. 6 : 20, Matt. 5 : 16.

3. It is necessary on our own account. For by our good works we are assured in ourselves of our faith by the fruits thereof. We are assured that we have true faith, for that is not a mere fancy, a faith of the head and lips, which manifests itself as the power of God in good works. Good works must proceed from true faith, as necessarily as good fruit must come from a good, healthy tree. As such a tree cannot do otherwise than bring forth good fruit, so true faith necessarily produces good works. (This does not imply that those who are born again do not still commit sin, but it does teach that what does not proceed from faith is sin. Rom. 14 : 33.) Matt. 7 : 17, 18, "Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit. . . . A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit ; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." Whence then arise the sins of the regenerate man ? He is in this life like a grafted tree ; the fruit which grows upon the branches of the graft is good fruit. If, however, sprouts shoot forth from the old stock and are allowed to develop, they will bring forth bad fruit, wild apples or wild pears. James 2 : 17, 1 John 2 : 3, 4, 2 Peter 1 : 10.

4. It is helpful to the salvation of our fellow-man, "That by our godly conversation others may be gained to Christ" (*i. e.*, encouraged to believe on Christ and thus to become children of God). This is the demand of love toward our neighbor and of duty in respect to the extension of the kingdom of God. Our godly conversation is to have a beneficial influence,

a) Upon those who are united with us in the faith. Rom. 14 : 19.

b) Upon those who stand in any relation to us, but are still unbelieving. 1 Peter 3 : 1, 2.

c) Upon those who are yet hostile to the faith. 1 Peter 2 : 12. The proverb : *verba docent, exempla trahunt*, might in this connection be rendered : Words instruct, example converts.

5. Olevianus. "Good works do not make us either wholly or in part righteous before God. But this end they serve that, after we are justified, freely of grace, through the imputation of Christ's righteousness, we may show ourselves thankful to God the Lord by good works, so that God may be praised by us, whereunto we were created in the beginning and are again redeemed. Luke 1 : 74, "That we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life." They also serve this good end that we are assured by works, as the fruit of faith, that we do not have a false but a true faith. In the third place, that through the influence of our good works others may be won to Christ, and that those who have already been won to Him may be kept from falling away, and be preserved and built up more and more in Christ.

6. The first confession of Basle (1535), Article 9, says : "We receive the forgiveness of sins through faith in Jesus Christ, the crucified one, and although such faith exercises and manifests itself unremittingly through works of love and is confirmed by them, yet we do not ascribe the righteousness and the satisfaction for our sins to the works which are the fruits of our faith, but only to true trust and faith in the shed blood of the Lamb of God. For we freely confess that in Christ, who is our righteousness, holiness, redemption, way, truth, wisdom and life, all things are a free gift. Therefore the works of believers are not per-

formed as a satisfaction for their sins, but only that by them believers may in some degree show themselves thankful to God the Lord for the great benefit which is conferred on them in Christ."

Question 87.

Cannot they then be saved, who, continuing in their wicked and ungrateful lives, are not converted to God?

By no means; for the holy scripture declares that no unchaste person, idolater, adulterer, thief, covetous man, drunkard, slanderer, robber, or any such like, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

1. As good works, *i. e.*, a godly life, are fruits of regeneration, proofs of thankfulness, and marks of true faith, so wicked works, *i. e.*, an ungodly life, are fruits of the flesh, proofs of unthankfulness and marks of unbelief. Matt. 7 : 16.

2. Of open sins and infamous conduct only a few kinds are mentioned. Unchaste persons are such as violate the law of modesty by unclean words or deeds. Idolatrous persons are those who love anything else more than God, *e. g.*, money and possessions, or eating and drinking ("whose belly is their God, whose end is condemnation," Phil. 3 : 19). Adulterers are those who are not true to their marriage vows. Thieves are such as secretly gain possession of the property of others. Covetous persons are those whose thoughts and efforts are entirely bent upon the accumulation and retention of earthly possessions. (In Col. 3 : 5, covetousness is called idolatry, for the covetous man makes mammon his God.) Drunkards are those who are addicted to the excessive use of spirituous liquors, of which the most dangerous and ruinous is whiskey! Slanderers are those who dishonor God by the blasphemous use of His name, and men by abuse and calumny. Robbers are those who violently appropriate the property of others. "Or any such like," as for example murderers, to which class not only belong those who

seriously wound other persons or kill them, but also such as live in hatred and slay with the tongue. 1 John 3 : 15, 1 Cor. 6 : 9, 10.

3. We are not saved by good works, nor on their account, nor are we saved without them ; for where there are no good works, *i. e.*, a godly conversation, true faith and life from God are also lacking. 1 Thess. 4 : 7, "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." And wicked works deserve condemnation. Rev. 20 : 13, Gal. 6 : 8.

4. Those will be visited by an especially heavy judgment who pretend to have faith and yet dishonor the name of Christ by wicked works. 2 Peter 2 : 2, 3, Matt. 18 : 7.

5. Those who do not repent, cannot be saved ; but those who live in sin and shame, may be saved if they are regenerated by the Spirit of God. 1 Cor. 6 : 11.

6. On this account, however, no one who is still living in sin is justified in postponing his repentance. To-day thou livest, to-day do thou repent ! To-day thou art in the ruddiness of health, to-morrow in the embrace of death ! Luke 12 : 20, Heb. 3 : 7, 8.

OF REPENTANCE OR THE CONVERSION OF MAN.

Question 88.

In how many parts doth the true conversion of man consist ?

In two parts ; in the mortification of the old, and in the quickening of the new man.

(Compare with this Question also the explanation of Question 43.)

I. The Significance of the Words Repentance and Conversion.

1. Repentance.

a) The German word "Busze" (translated repentance) carried with it originally the idea of restitution or of a fee for wrong inflicted upon another. The word

was, therefore, also applied to the punishment imposed by the court. The word "bueszen" in the next place means to close up a breach. Amos 9: 11, "Close up the breaches." It further means to amend a wrong by taking upon oneself the punishment of it. In this sense the Romish Church still conceives of "Busze," in that it teaches that sins are atoned for and, thereby, forgiveness obtained by the bearing of ecclesiastical penalties, or the fulfillment of specially imposed works, like fasting, the performance of stated prayers (our Father and Ave Maria, the so-called rosary), alms, mortifications, pilgrimages.

b) The word "Busze" in the biblical sense has a different signification. It means properly "change of mind." Mark 1: 4, Acts 2: 38.

2. The word repentance is derived from "to repent," which means to turn about from a perverted way to the right way. To repent, therefore, means to turn from the way of sin in which we walk by nature, and to turn to God and walk in His ways. Zech. 1: 4, Isa. 55: 7.

3. The word "Busze" is used in various senses, at one time to indicate sorrow or pain on account of sin, then again it includes the idea of faith. In the latter sense, repentance and conversion mean one and the same thing, viz., inward and outward turning away from sin to the living God. Isa. 1: 16, 17, Acts 3: 19, Eph. 4: 22-24.

4. Ursinus. "True repentance, or change of mind, or conversion is the change or renewal of man effected by the Holy Ghost, by which man, in consequence of the true knowledge of God and of His holy will, as the same has been revealed in the law and the gospel, and of his own corruption and guilt, is made terribly afraid on account of the wrath and judgment of God against sin, and regrets that by his sins he has offended and still offends God; and yet in the obedience of faith in

Christ and with an improved life, rests upon the mercy of God and the promise of grace through trust in Christ as the Mediator. And because he is certain of being reconciled with God through Him, he surrenders and subjects himself to Him, as a son to a gracious father, and for such acceptance in grace proves himself thankful to God through eternity."

II. What is to be Understood by the Mortification of the Old and the Quickening of the New Man.

1. The old and the new man. This is a figure of speech.

a) By the old man is meant the sinful nature of man or the inclination to sin which clings to him by nature. It is called "man," because it fills and controls the entire man in body and soul. It is called "old," because it is inherited from Adam (therefore also "the old Adam") and is born in us.

b) The new man is the disposition and inclination of man toward the good, effected by the Holy Ghost. It is called "man," because it likewise embraces the whole man, and must control him in body and soul. It is called new, because it stands in opposition to the former natural and sinful being. 1 Thess. 5 : 23.

2. Mortification and quickening.

a) Mortification is not used in the sense in which it is used when anything decays and dies on account of sickness or old age. It rather carries with it the idea of continuous destruction, of handing over to death, and of being subject to it more and more.

b) In the same way quickening is also properly making alive, with which is connected the idea of increase, of growth in life.

c) The figure is taken from Rom. 6 : 4-6.

III. Wherein "True" Conversion is Distinguished from False.

1. As there is faith that deceives, so there is also hypocritical repentance. This kind of conversion either

does not last or affects the outward life only, for the sake of advantage, or which has its motive only in the fear of punishment for sin and not in the love of God, or which is contented with a mere outward fulfillment of the law, while the heart remains the same. Hos. 7 : 16, Ex. 8 : 8, 15, Matt. 15 : 8. Examples of false repentance : Judas, Matt. 27 : 3-5 ; Simon Magus, Acts 8 : 13, 18-21.

2. True repentance consists in sincere and heart-felt sorrow for sin, on account of which we have offended God and have requited His goodness with contempt, and affects the whole life. 2 Cor. 7 : 10, Matt. 26 : 75. The prodigal son is an example of true repentance and conversion. Luke 15.

3. For the manner and mode of true conversion there is no fixed form (as with the Methodists with their anxious bench and penitent seat), but it takes place in accordance with the will and guidance of God, either gradually, as in the case of the patriarch Jacob, or instantaneously, as in the case of Saul, but it must always reach the point of actual decision. 1 Kings 18 : 21, Gen. 32 : 26.

IV. For Whom True Repentance and Conversion are Necessary.

1. Repentance as a renunciation of sin and the beginning of a new life is necessary for those who are yet under the power and dominion of sin. Isa. 55 : 7.

2. But because believers still daily commit sin, they stand in continued need of repentance, by the mortification of the old man (in struggling against the sin which is still clinging to them and makes them weary, Heb. 12 : 1), as well as by the quickening of the new man, and the recovering from their constant falls. Rev. 2 : 4, 5.

Examples : David, the man after God's heart, Ps. 51 ; and Peter, the disciple of the Lord, Luke 22 : 32, 62.

3. Children, too, must be converted, not although, but because they are baptized. They are baptized into Christ's death and, thereby, obligated to lay aside the old man and to live a new life (Rom. 6 : 4-6, Ecces. 12 : 1, Prov. 8 : 17).

Examples of converted youths are Joseph (Gen. 39 : 9), Samuel (1 Sam. 2 : 26 ; 3 : 10), and Timothy (Acts 16 : 1, 2, 2 Tim. 1 : 5 ; 3 : 15).

4. Ursinus. "Our conversion to God is not perfect in this life, but is here continually advancing, until it reaches the perfection which is proposed in the life to come. 'We know in part.' (1 Cor. 13 : 9.) All the complaints and prayers of the saints are confirmations of this truth. 'Cleanse thou me from secret faults.' 'O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death.' (Ps. 19 : 13, Rom. 7 : 24.) The conflict which is continually going on in those who are converted, bears testimony to the same truth. 'The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh,' etc. (Gal. 5, Rom. 7.) The same thing may be said of the exhortations of the prophets and apostles, in which they exhort those who are converted to turn more fully unto God. 'He that is righteous, let him be righteous still, and he that is holy, let him be holy still.' (Rev. 22 : 11.) We may also establish the same thing in the following manner : Neither the mortification of the flesh, nor the quickening of the Spirit, is absolute or perfect in the saints in this life. Therefore, neither is conversion, which consists of these two parts, perfect. As it respects the mortification of the old man, the case is clear, and does not admit of doubt that it is not perfect in this life ; because the saints do not only continually strive against the lust of the flesh, but they also often for a time yield, and give over in this conflict—often do they sin, fall and offend God, although they do not defend their sins, but detest,

deplore, and endeavor to avoid them. As it regards the imperfection of the quickening of the new man, the same conflict is a sufficient testimony ; and surely as our knowledge is now only in part, the renovation of the will and heart must also be imperfect : for the will follows the knowledge which we have.

“ There are two plain reasons why the will, in the case of those who are converted, tends imperfectly to the good in this life :

“ 1. Because the renovation of our nature is never made perfect in this life, neither as it respects our knowledge of God, nor the inclination which we have to obey Him. The single complaint and acknowledgment which the Apostle Paul made is a sufficient proof of what we have just said. ‘ I know that in me, that is, in my flesh dwelleth no good thing,’ etc. (Rom. 7 : 18, 19.) 2. Because those who are converted are not always governed by the Holy Spirit, but are sometimes for a season deserted by God, either for the purpose of trying, or chastising, or humbling them ; yet they are nevertheless brought to repentance, so as not to perish. ‘ Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief.’ (Mark 9 : 24, Ezek. 16 : 61.)

“ But why does God not perfect conversion in case of the people in this life, seeing that He is able to effect it ? The reasons are :

“ 1. That the saints may be humbled and exercised in faith, patience, prayer and wrestling against the flesh, and that they may not boast of their perfection, thinking more highly of themselves than they ought, but daily pray : ‘ Enter not into judgment with thy servant.’ ‘ Forgive us our sins.’ (Ps. 143 : 2, Matt. 6 : 12.)

“ 2. That they may press forward more and more unto perfection, and desire it more earnestly. That, trampling the world under their feet, they may run

with greater alacrity in the Christian course, and aspire after those joys that are laid up in heaven, knowing that it will not be until then that they shall fully enjoy their promised inheritance. 'Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth, for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.' 'Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth.' 'It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him.' " (Col. 3 : 2, 3, 5, 1 John 3 : 2.)

5. Calvin. "This restoration is not accomplished in a single moment, or day, or year; but by continual, and sometimes even slow advances, the Lord destroys the carnal corruptions of His chosen, purifies them from all pollution, and consecrates them as temples to Himself; renewing all their senses to real purity, that they may employ their whole life in the exercise of repentance and know that this warfare will be terminated only in death."

6. Luther's first word in the Reformation reads as follows: "As our Lord and Master Jesus Christ says: Repent, etc., it is His will that the entire life on earth of those who believe on Him should be a steady and continual repentance."

V. Whose Work Repentance or Conversion is.

1. No man can convert himself, as in his totally corrupt nature he has neither the knowledge nor the power. Jer. 13 : 23.

2. Conversion in its beginning, as well as in its progress, until its completion in the future life, is the work of God, particularly of the Holy Ghost. Ezek. 36 : 26, 27.

3. When the prophets (Joel 2 : 12, "Turn ye even to me with all your heart") and the apostles (Peter, Acts 3 : 19, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted")

summoned to repentance, their demands were always addressed to the people of God, who had the law of God to give them the knowledge of sin, and in which their sins were held before them by God's Word and Spirit. Among the Gentiles Paul always preached the gospel before summoning them to repentance, as Jesus Himself commanded him. Acts 26 : 17, 18.

The summons is addressed, according to God's command, to all men alike, but conversion follows only in the case of those in whom God Himself accomplishes it.

John 6 : 44, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him. . . ." Rom. 9 : 18, "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Phil. 2 : 13, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." The demand of the apostle, "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," is based upon the fact that he is addressing converted persons, in whom the power of God is at work, so that they are active in good works. Compare Heb. 13 : 20, 21.

4. All in whom God by His word and by the influence of the Holy Ghost has awakened a desire for salvation, know that they cannot convert themselves. Jer. 31 : 18, 19, Song of Solomon 1 : 4.

5. Augsburg Confession (1530), Article 5: "The Holy Ghost worketh faith where and when it pleaseth God, in those that hear the gospel."

6. Ursinus. "All the elect are truly converted in this life, and the final victory in the struggle of the spirit with the flesh is not doubtful. For in those in whom true repentance has once begun, it never entirely ceases, even if they occasionally sin grievously through human weakness and through that which in this life still clings to them of the old man or of sin, so that they are enabled to recover from their fall and will

finally be saved. Matt. 7 : 24, Phil. 1 : 6, 1 John 2 : 19, 3, 9. Nevertheless the will of God in this respect does not warrant any one's taking license in sinning, nor in postponing his repentance from sin to some future time. For to those who do not live in carnal security, but in true penitence and piety, the promise of the present and the eternal grace of God avails. Not only on account of the uncertainty of human life, but chiefly on account of the wrath of God against those who in self-security and against their conscience abuse God's mercy, are they in danger, according to the righteous judgment of God, of being forsaken and hardened, and of eternal damnation through being snatched out of this life without repentance. Matt. 24 : 28, 24, Rom. 2 : 4."

Question 89

What is the mortification of the old man ?

It is a sincere sorrow of heart, that we have provoked God by our sins ; and more and more to hate and flee from them.

Question 90.

What is the quickening of the new man ?

It is a sincere joy of heart in God, through Christ, and with love and delight to live according to the will of God in all good works.

I. THE MORTIFICATION OF THE OLD MAN.

A. The Significance of the Word Mortification.

1. Mortification means to destroy or crucify. Rom. 8 : 3, Gal. 5 : 24.

It is thus spoken of, 1. Because it is a painful work ; 2. Because the death of the old man is not brought about at once, but gradually ; 3. Because it takes place in virtue of the death of Christ.

2. Die (unto sin), before thou diest (in death), in order that thou mayest not die (the eternal death), when thou diest (the temporal death).

B. The Two Parts of Mortification.

1. "A sincere sorrow of heart that we have provoked God by our sins." The Holy Ghost brings about in the sinner,

a) The knowledge of sin, in that He reveals to him sin as sin, and shows him how great it is and how heinous. Ps. 51 : 3.

b) In that He convinces him of the guilt of sin as an offence against the highest Majesty of God. Jer. 3 : 13.

c) So that the sinner becomes ashamed of sin and is filled with sorrow on account of it. Dan. 9 : 7, James 4 : 9, Joel 2 : 13, 2 Cor. 7 : 10.

d) And is driven to the acknowledgment of his sin before God. Ps. 32 : 3, 5, 1 John 1 : 9.

Since all our sins as violations of God's holy law are committed against God alone and He only has power to forgive sin in Christ, we owe it to Him only to confess our sins. The confession of such sins as we have committed against men, and before men, is necessary, in order to obtain forgiveness for them. The confession of sins in general, even to men, is advisable, when in human weakness the support and prayers of others are needed. To this the counsel of the apostle refers. James 5 : 16, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." For such confession one is directed not merely to the minister, but also to every earnest and experienced Christian ("one to another"), and so-called private confession cannot be required; least of all has the auricular confession of the Romish Church, which serves only to bring the conscience into subjection, any ground in the Scriptures.

2. "And more and more to hate and flee from them."

a) The hating of sin is the abhorrence of it, not on account of temporal shame and injury or punishment,

but because God is offended by sin and God Himself hates sin. Rom. 12 : 9, Ps. 45 : 7. That in which man formerly found his pleasure according to the flesh, he now hates. Ps. 119 : 104.

b) He who is really earnest in abhorring and hating sin, also avoids it. He not only avoids trifling with sin, as children play with fire, but he also carefully shuns every opportunity which might lead him into temptation. That which he formerly sought, the pleasures of sin, he now flees. 2 Tim. 2 : 19, Eph. 5 : 4.

c) "More and more." The knowledge of sin is the beginning of repentance, but the knowledge of our sins is not at once complete; just as we recognize with increasing daylight the individual objects about us more and more clearly than when the day begins to dawn. With growth in knowledge and exercise in godliness, the power to avoid and flee from sin grows also more and more. Eph. 3 : 16.

II. THE QUICKENING OF THE NEW MAN.

A. The Significance of the Word "Quickenings."

1. Quickenings signifies to be made alive in the inner man by the power of the Holy Ghost, and rests upon the power of Christ's resurrection. Col. 3 : 1.

2. The Holy Ghost quickens the penitent sinner and lifts him up, or he would perish in his sorrow. Ps. 38 : 4.

3. Without contrition of heart there is no joy of the new life in conversion, and when this state is not reached, repentance is only partial or not of the right kind. Ps. 51 : 3, 12.

B. The Two Parts of Quickenings.

1. "Sincere joy of heart in God, through Christ."

a) This is the inward joy of those who have been converted, on account of the fact that God's grace, for-

givenness of sins and eternal life, have been granted to them through Christ. Rom. 5: 1, Isa. 61: 10.

b) That which formerly was foolishness to him, God's grace and truth, has now become his greatest joy.

c) Joy in God, joyfulness, is not experienced by all who are converted, nor to the same extent at all times by the same person. There will be hours of temptation and times of refreshing. Ps. 42: 6, 7; 138: 7.

2. "Love and delight to live according to the will of God in all good works."

a) Joyfulness is more a state of the heart; desire and love for the good and zeal in good works constitute the activity of the new man, the actual proof of the sincerity and genuineness of repentance. Rom. 7: 22, Gal. 2: 19, 20.

b) That which man formerly disdained, viz., to do God's will and to keep His commandments, he now regards his highest honor. For to be God's servant is to be the Lord's free man. Rom. 6: 20-22.

c) A truly converted Christian is in the world, but not of the world. John 17: 11, 16, James 1: 27.

Examples of true repentance and conversion: the publican, Luke 18; the prodigal son, Luke 15; Peter, Matt. 26 and John 21.

Examples of false repentance: Cain, Gen. 4; Judas, Matt. 27.

See also the penitential psalms: 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143.

OF GOOD WORKS.

Question 91.

But what are good works?

Only those which proceed from a true faith, are performed according to the law of God, and to his glory, and not such as are founded on our imaginations, or the institutions of men.

In accordance with Question 86, thankfulness for redemption through Christ, and in accordance with Question 90, the new life of the one who has been converted and regenerated, manifest themselves in good works.

By good works we understand the entire new life from God, as well as its manifestations in single words and acts. And hereby again not merely religious and other acts are to be understood, which are accepted as special manifestations of piety, but all manifestations of our personal as well as of our professional life are included.

It is necessary at this point to set forth the real nature of good works, not only for these reasons, but also to confute the self-constituted and so-called "good works" which the Romish Church regards as meritorious. The word "only" at the beginning of the question, let it be noted, has reference to the three parts of the same.

I. The True Ground from which Good Works Proceed.

1. Good works proceed "only from a true faith," which consists in a certain knowledge of God and of His word, and in hearty confidence in His grace in Christ Jesus. Heb. 11 : 4, 6, Rom. 14 : 23.

a) From the right understanding of the truth that God requires good works from us. Micah 6 : 8.

b) From true confidence in the promise (1) that God will give to His own, strength to perform good works,

Isa. 40 : 29 ; and (2) that our good works, notwithstanding their imperfections, are acceptable to Him. Heb. 13 : 16.

II. The Law According to which Good Works are Performed.

Good works are to be performed "only according to the law of God." The law of God has a double purpose. First, it is to bring us to a knowledge of our sins ; for by the law is the knowledge of sin. Rom. 3 : 20. When, however, we have received the forgiveness of sins and have entered upon the new life, it becomes to us the rule and guide, in accordance with which, by the help of God, we are to lead a life well-pleasing to Him. Lev. 18 : 4, Ezek. 20 : 19, Gal. 6 : 16.

III. The Purpose for which they are Performed.

Good works are performed "only to His glory," for to honor and glorify God is the highest aim of the new life. 1 Cor. 10 : 31, Matt. 6 : 2.

IV. Errors to be Avoided.

1. The above three parts in their entirety are the necessary attributes of good works ; when one of them is lacking, the whole act is of no value.

2. But especially are we to guard against the error that good works are "founded in our imaginations, or the institutions of men."

3. We are not to presume to be wiser than God, and to change His order according to our pleasure. Deut. 12 : 8, 32. God rejected Saul on account of such self-willed conduct, and took away from him his throne and crown. 1 Sam. 15 : 7-23. V. 22, "And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

4. Commandments of men are such as men substitute for God's commandments, or for which the claim

is made that they are in force alongside of God's commandments, or that they are even more binding. These are to be rejected, and works which are founded upon them cannot be regarded as truly good and acceptable to God.

a) Such commandments and works God rejected already in Israel under the old covenant. Isa. 29 : 13, 14.

b) Because the Pharisees practiced such "traditions of the elders" and sought honor in good works, the Lord rejected them as hypocrites. Matt. 6 : 1-7, 16, 17 ; 15 : 1-14.

c) When this old system sought again to fasten itself upon the early Christians, the Apostle Paul (Col. 2 : 20-23) warned them against such doctrines and ordinances of men, which have the appearance of wisdom on account of self-appointed sanctity and humility, and by their not sparing the body from all sorts of castigations, and by not honoring it enough to satisfy its wants. ("Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship and humility, and severity to the body ; but are not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh.")

d) In the Romish Church this system is practiced through almsgiving, fasting (abstinence from meats), the rosary (praying a number of "Our Fathers" and "Ave Marias" in succession), and pilgrimages. Still in advance of this system is that of the monasteries with their so-called "evangelical resolutions," voluntary poverty, chastity, and voluntary, unconditional obedience under a spiritual superior.

e) In the evangelical Church it is also necessary to guard against an unlawful system of works by reason of the manifold activities of the kingdom of God (in home and foreign missions), and in the adornment of churches, etc.

OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

Question 92.

What is the law of God?

God spake all these words, *Exod. 20, Deut. 5*, saying: I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

FIRST COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

SECOND COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

THIRD COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

FOURTH COMMANDMENT.

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy: six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt do no manner of work, thou nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man servant nor thy maid servant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

FIFTH COMMANDMENT.

Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

SIXTH COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not kill.

SEVENTH COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

EIGHTH COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not steal.

NINTH COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

TENTH COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man servant, nor his maid servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's.

I. THE GIVING OF THE LAW.

1. God Himself gave the law to the Israelites upon Mount Sinai, through Moses, the Mediator of the Old Covenant, after He had led them as His chosen people out of Egypt on the way to the land which He had promised them. The giving of the law was the solemn ratification of the covenant between God and the people. "God spake all these words" (Ex. 20 : 1) ; it is, therefore, the law of God. It is called the law of Moses, because God gave it through Moses. God did not reveal it to Moses, as He did many other things merely by revelation to the understanding, but gave it to him by writing it Himself upon tables of stone. The importance of the giving of the law was made manifest by the requirement that the people should specially prepare themselves for it, should purify themselves by washing, and should not approach the mountain, as well as by the impressive manifestations which they saw and heard.

2. The form of the several requirements of the law is either a command or a prohibition, mostly the latter, because the law opposes sin. In respect to its contents every requirement comprehends both a command and a prohibition. In the next place, by the use of the words "thou" the people as a whole are addressed, and at the same time also every individual member.

3. The law of the ten commandments which God gave to the people of the old covenant is also binding under the new covenant. Christ says, Matt. 5 : 17, 18, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or

the prophets : I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." (The law is not to be fulfilled merely outwardly according to the letter, but in its deeper meaning and also inwardly. Rom. 3 : 31.)

II. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

The law given on Sinai is also called "the ten commandments" (decatalogue). Ex. 34 : 28, Deut. 4 : 13 ; 10 : 4. The division of the several commandments is not indicated in the Scriptures, but that the Reformed enumeration is the correct one, appears from the following :

1. The conclusion of the commandments reads, Ex. 20 : 17, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant," etc., and in the repetition of the law, Deut. 5 : 21, "Neither shalt thou desire thy neighbor's wife, neither shalt thou covet thy neighbors house, his field or his man-servant," etc. If these were two separate commandments, the ninth and the tenth, Moses must have erred in the order of the commandments when he stated them the second time, which, however, is impossible. But if they are one commandment, the tenth, it makes no difference whether in the one instance "the neighbor's wife" and in the other "the neighbor's house" be mentioned first. The Apostle Paul, as well as all the Jews of his time, recognized it only as one commandment, when he refers to it, Rom. 7 : 7, "For I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet."

2. From the first commandment, which demands worship of the only true God, the second is distinguished, which forbids worshipping the true God falsely. It is also specially set off by the threat

attached to it. If it had been God's purpose to make the threatening and the promise refer to all the commandments, He would have placed both of them at the end of the commandments. Besides, the second commandment, Deut. 4: 15-26, was impressed upon the people by Moses as especially important.

3. As the Reformed Church divides the commandments, so they have been divided at all times, even to the present day, by the Jews, unto whom, according to Rom. 3: 2, "were entrusted the oracles of God;" also by the Christians of the first centuries, as is proved by the Church Fathers.

A. The Preamble.

1. As at the beginning of all laws issued by an earthly king, there stand the words: "By God's grace we, N. N.," in order to give by means of his name the power of law to his statements, so God has also placed at the beginning of His laws a preamble, which relates to all the commandments: "I am the Lord thy God, which hath brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage."

2. Three things are here expressed: The lawgiver is

a) "The Lord;" in the Hebrew, Jehovah, *i. e.*, the Eternal One, who hath all power of and in Himself;

b) "Thy God," who covenants with His people, that they should be His people and He their God;

c) The benefactor of His people, who by the deliverance of the people from Egypt manifested His power, as well as His mercy, toward them.

Accordingly Israel is to serve God obediently and thankfully on account of His omnipotence, truth and mercy.

3. The same holds true under the new covenant, in which deliverance from the bondage of sin and satan by redemption through Christ has taken the place of deliverance from the house of bondage in Egypt.

B. The Commandments in Particular.

1. The first commandment has reference to the being of God. Because He alone is truly God, therefore we are to have no other Gods beside or above Him. Deut. 6 : 4. This only true God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, has revealed Himself to us in His word as the Triune God. This is the significance of the first commandment for us.

2. The second commandment has reference to the service and worship of God.

a) The heathen nations worshipped their gods, and still do it by means of statues of gold, silver, iron, stone or wood, whichever might serve as an appropriate image, or in other objects in which they found a resemblance, a "likeness" to one of their gods. These images were taken from the "heavens," as sun, moon and stars, also birds; from the "earth," as men, animals or plants; from the "water," as fish or other aquatic animals.

The children of Israel were not to do thus with their God, or the worship of God would become a worship of idols. Against this commandment Israel sinned when Moses was upon Mount Sinai and Aaron in his weakness allowed himself to make an image of God, the golden calf. The form was copied, it is true, from the highest god of the Egyptians, a bull; but Aaron and the people wished, however, to worship the only true God thereby. The people said, Ex. 32 : 4, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt." And Aaron made a proclamation (v. 5), "To-morrow shall be a feast to the Lord."

The prohibition : not to bow down to them nor to serve them, relates to the worship of particular gods and to worship in general, or to personal and religious worship.

b) "Jealous," *i. e.*, envious, a God who jealously protects His honor and will not share it with an idol. Isa. 42 : 8, Heb. 12 : 29. Because He is "almighty God," He is able, and because He is a "jealous God," He will and does punish the transgression of this commandment as sin. "To visit" means to go in quest of one in his home. God visits a man, either to show him favors or to punish and chastise him. ("Visitation.")

c) From the very threatening of God it appears most certainly that the second commandment is a special one, and that this threatening relates only to the transgression of this one. Otherwise the word of God would stand in irreconcilable contradiction with itself when it states, as in Ezek. 18 : 20, "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father." The Lord will visit and punish idolatry among His people, unto the third and fourth generation, and will then perchance not rest, but will uproot the family in the third or fourth generation. The history of the kings in the kingdom of Israel furnishes examples. The "sin of Jeroboam" consisted in this, that in two places (Bethel and Dan) he set up golden calves, that his people might not attend the service at Jerusalem, but might there worship Jehovah. (1 Kings 12 : 28, the same words are used here as in Aaron's time!) The family of Jeroboam was exterminated on this account (1 Kings 14 : 9, 10 ; 15 : 29, 30), so also the house of Baasha (16 : 1-3), Ahab (21 : 21, 22, 2 Kings 10 : 17), and Jehu (2 Kings 10 : 30, 31 ; 13 : 2, 3, 10, 11 ; 14 : 23, 24 ; 15 : 8-10), the fourth generation.

3. The third commandment relates to the name of God. His name is the designation of His Being, therefore no empty word, and sin against His name is directed against Himself. "To take in vain" (to make unlawful or bad use of anything) translated literally means : using the name of God as a lie, *i. e.*, as a cloak for a lie, and thereby making God Himself a liar.

4. The fourth commandment has reference to the Lord's day.

a) This commandment does not begin : "Thou shalt," but : "Remember the Sabbath day." The Sabbath was already instituted by God in Paradise, and this fact is brought forward at the close of the commandment as the basis for it. By being here renewed, it is called to the remembrance of the people.

b) Sabbath day means day of rest ("Feiertag" (holy day), from "feiern," *i. e.*, to keep holy, compare "Feierabend"). It is hallowed, in that it is separated from the ordinary purposes to which days are devoted in secular work and business, and dedicated to God, *i. e.*, consecrated to the service of God.

c) The week has seven days, of which God gives six to man and desires only one for Himself. And this one day God has especially "blessed" as a day of rest. For experience in all ages has proved the wisdom of God, in that the seventh day (one day of the week) has been found indispensable to man's nature for relaxation from labor and for the recuperation of his powers, and not peradventure the tenth (one day of a "decade"), as was attempted in the French Revolution by the men who rebelled against all God's ordinances. They themselves discontinued the innovation, because they found that men could not hold out under it.

d) "The stranger that is within thy gates" was the one who belonged to another people and tarried among the people of Israel. Not only he, but also the servants (man-servant and maid-servant) and the cattle were to have part in the blessing of the Sabbath, *i. e.*, rest.

e) God rested, *i. e.*, He ceased to create anything new. He "hallowed" the seventh day, *i. e.*, He separated it for His service.

5. The fifth commandment relates to family life, and in its wider application also to public life, inasmuch as

a people are to be considered an extended family. The parents are God's representatives in the family, and rulers or government in the state. As there is added to the second commandment a special threat, so there is attached to the fifth a special promise: long life in the promised land. Eph. 6 : 2. With Canaan, the land of promise, Christians have nothing to do. It was only the type of the heavenly Canaan, which is our land of promise. And because the promise carried with it an earthly blessing, the Apostle applies the word "land" to the entire earth.

6. The sixth commandment relates to human life.

7. The seventh to the matrimonial state.

8. The eighth to our neighbor's property.

9. The ninth to our neighbor's reputation.

10. The tenth intensifies not only the seventh and the eighth, but also points out how the whole law is to be understood, that it forbids not only the evil deed, but also the evil desire in the heart. Rom. 7 : 7.

Question 93.

How are these ten commandments divided ?

Into two tables ; the first of which teaches us how we must behave towards God ; the second, what duties we owe to our neighbor.

1. The division into two tables or sections was made by God Himself at the giving of the law, when He commanded Moses to make not one, but two stone tables, and wrote upon them the "ten commandments." Deut. 4 : 13.

2. Moses already distinguished the two tables according to their contents, viz., love to God and to one's neighbor. Deut. 6 : 5, Lev. 19 : 18.

3. So also Christ gathered up the law in two commandments. Matt. 22 : 37-40.

4. To the Israelite his neighbor was his countryman, an Israelite, not only a friendly Israelite, but also

a personal enemy (an Israelite), toward whom he was to manifest love. Lev. 19: 17, 18 (compare Matt. 18: 15), Ex. 23: 4.

But Christ says in the sermon on the mount, Matt. 5: 43, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy." This contradicts, rightly understood, the former in no way. For here we find contrasted with their countrymen, their "neighbors," the enemies of the people, the heathen, the Canaanites and other nations, whom Israel was to shun and hate on account of their abominations, in order that they might not be led astray by them. Lev. 26: 7.

On the other hand, the Israelite was commanded to love the same as his countryman, his "neighbor," the "stranger," who was not his countryman, but who dwelt in the land and was obedient to the laws and ordinances of God. Lev. 19: 33, 34.

Under the new covenant, which is not limited like the old by national boundaries, every man who is in need of his help stands in the relation of neighbor to the Christian, in accordance with the answer which Christ gave in the parable of the good Samaritan to the question: "Who is my neighbor?" Luke 10: 29-37.

5. The question whether the fifth commandment belongs to the first or to the second table, must be answered according as we see in parents, the representatives of God, or as we regard them in the light of standing nearest to us among "our neighbors." It stands as a connecting link in the centre, but must belong to the one table or to the other. The catechism classes it after the manner of Calvin in the Geneva Catechism with the second table, and this is in so far also suitable, since only the commandments which relate directly to God stand upon the first table, and

on the second those which regulate the conduct of men in their relation with one another.

Question 94.

What doth God enjoin in the first command?

That I, as sincerely as I desire the salvation of my own soul, avoid and flee from all idolatry, sorcery, soothsaying, superstition, invocation of saints, or any other creatures, and learn rightly to know the only true God, trust in him alone, with humility and patience submit to him, expect all good things from him only; love, fear, and glorify him with my whole heart; so that I renounce and forsake all creatures, rather than commit even the least thing contrary to his will.

Question 95.

What is idolatry?

Idolatry is, instead of, or besides, that one true God, who has manifested himself in his word, to contrive or have any other object in which men place their trust.

I. The Prohibition.

A. The four forbidden sins which we are to “avoid and flee;” *i. e.*, we are not to be guilty of them ourselves, nor are we in any manner whatever to participate in them. 1 Cor. 10: 21.

1. Idolatry. We distinguish:

a) Gross idolatry, which consists in the substitution of anything else, either in thought or in act, for the only true God who has revealed Himself in His Word, as an object of divine worship in which confidence is reposed.

a) Among the heathen idolatry in all its forms. Rom. 1: 23, Ps. 81: 8, 9, 1 Cor. 6: 9.

b) Among Christians the *deification of nature*, when the personal living God is rejected and the universe is regarded as having originated of itself and as subsisting in itself, and the *denial of God*, when the existence of God, who has revealed Himself in His Word, is denied and a god after one's own notions is invented. Ps. 14: 1.

b) Refined idolatry, which exists among Christians when they place their confidence in anything else, either in thought or in act, alongside of the only true God, who has revealed Himself in His Word. 1 John 5: 21.

a) Worldliness. 1 John 2: 15-17, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." To this class belong:

(1) Money and goods, capital or fields, *i. e.*, all mammon worship. Examples: the rich young man, Matt. 19: 22; the rich man, Luke 12: 19, Matt. 6: 24, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (the riches of this world). Col. 3: 5, Covetousness is idolatry. 1 Tim. 6: 9.

(2) Honor among men. John 12: 43.

(3) Fine clothing. In Isaiah 3: 16-23 we have the earliest record of the fashions of the day; but in the next verse a statement of God's disapproval.

(4) Food and drink. Phil. 3: 19, 1 Peter 4: 7.

To the three gods of this world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, the following admonition is applicable:

"Courageously cast thy idol down,
Whether it be gold, lust or renown."

(*M. Claudius.*)

b) Hero worship:

(1) An excessive reverence of great men, such as scholars, statesmen and warriors. (Compare the foolish conduct of the people at Lystra and the apostles' remonstrance, Acts 14: 11-15.)

(2) The over-estimation of distinguished and powerful patrons (Jer. 17 : 5, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord").

(3) Deification of princes and kings on the impious principle that the service of princes takes precedence of God's service. Ps. 146 : 3.

(4) Excessive love to our nearest relatives, man, wife or children (blind partiality). Matt. 10 : 37, Luke 14 : 26.

c) Self-deification.

(1) Confidence in health and strength. Ps. 103 : 15, 16.

(2) Beauty. Isa. 14 : 11.

(3) Understanding, art and knowledge. Prov. 3 : 5.

(4) The so-called "good heart" and its virtues. Prov. 28 : 26.

d) The Reformers classified with these idolatries (1) the mass (compare Question 80), to which Luther also applied the words in Daniel 11 : 38, 39, and (2) the (infallible) Pope, who is honored by men prostrating themselves before him and kissing his red slipper (as is honored no prince in Christendom), to whom 2 Thess. 2 : 4 has been applied.

2. Sorcery. By sorcery is to be understood an effort to ascertain, by ways or means which have not been ordained by God, what He has hidden, or to attain what He has denied us. The former is done by means of fortune telling (from the lines of the hand, from coffee grounds, by cards, casting bullets on New Year's eve, etc.); the latter is done by means of so-called sympathetic cures, or pow-vowing, in which all manner of objects are made use of in connection with special ceremonies. These are remnants of ancient paganism, which have survived among Christians to the present day. Much of it is deception, but it is not to be denied

that there is also a kingdom of darkness, with its prince and its powers of darkness, whose operations are not only spiritual, but extend into the region of the physical life. So much must be accepted, even though through a heated imagination and foolish delusions much mischief has been done in times past, on account of so-called "compacts with the devil," and through "persecutions of witches," and though many who give themselves to these things do not realize what a wicked work they thereby carry on. In modern times sorcery has assumed new forms in addition to those prevalent in ancient times, such as the moving of tables, spirit-rapping, the calling up of spirits, and the whole proceeding of "spiritualism" with its media. Deut. 18 : 9-12, "When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire (this refers to human sacrifices offered to Moloch), one that useth divination (one who boasts of special understanding with a spirit, Acts 16 : 16), or an observer of times (one who chooses for his affairs in a superstitious manner certain days and times as specially fortunate, and avoids so-called "days of misfortune"), one that practiseth augury (one who pretends to read in the cry or flight of birds fortune or misfortune), or an enchanter, or a sorcerer (who employ magic formulas), or a consulter with a familiar spirit (one who superstitiously foretells the destiny of others), or a wizard (one who interprets as signs all sorts of intimations, such as the meeting of animals, etc.), or a necromancer (one who calls up the spirits of the dead, as did the witch of Endor at the request of Saul, 1 Sam. 28, and as do the modern spiritualists, whether they be deceivers or deceived).

3. Superstitious blessings; the use of mysterious formulas, objects consecrated, or in the Romish Church sprinkled with holy water, as sprinkling sticks, etc., to which is attributed the power of preserving man and animals from sickness or from being "bewitched." To this class also belongs that kind of formal consecration, which is believed to impart to lifeless objects, such as altars, crucifixes, candles, organs, bells and other church utensils, a special sanctity, by pronouncing the name of the Triune God, and by making the sign of the cross over them. The Church of the Gospel must keep itself free from such practices, even in their more moderate form. For there can be no consecration of church property, such as church buildings and their accessories, cemeteries, etc., other than that of publicly setting them apart, in the presence of the whole congregation, to their appointed uses. A church is "dedicated" by the first service that is held in it, and a cemetery by the word of God which is proclaimed at the first burial in it. 1 Tim. 4: 5, "For it is sanctified through the word of God and prayer" (but not by holy water and by making the sign of the cross).

4. Invocation of saints and of other creatures. In the Romish Church the dead who have been canonized by the Pope, at whose head stands the Virgin Mary as the "Mother of God" and "queen of heaven," as well as certain angels, especially the "guardian angels," are not only "invoked" for the sake of their help and intercession with God, but are also worshipped, in that altars are erected and divine services are addressed to them. Their "invocation" is already a violation of the first commandment; still more their "adoration," which, although theoretically rejected by the Church, is actually tolerated among the Catholic people. In the Romish Church the worship of God is passing more and more into Mariolatry, which was especially

brought into favor by the Jesuits, and by which sentimental souls in the Evangelical Church are very frequently taken captive. Jer. 44 : 17, "But we will certainly perform every word that is gone forth out of our mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem : for then had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil." So spake to the prophets the idolatrous men of Judah, who had been led astray by their wives to the worship of the "queen of heaven." Matt. 4 : 10, Acts 10 : 25, 26, Rev. 19 : 10.

B. "As sincerely as I desire the salvation of my own soul." God will not suffer to go unpunished such transgressions of His commandments, which affect His majesty and honor. They involve the loss of happiness and salvation. Jer. 17 : 5, Rev. 22 : 15.

II. What Is Commanded.

A. The eight virtues that are enjoined.

1. The right knowledge of God : "And learn rightly to know the only true God." The source of this knowledge is the Holy Scriptures alone, in which the only true God has revealed Himself. The knowledge is of the right kind, if it is a living knowledge, *i. e.*, if it is not merely apprehended by the understanding, but is also practiced in life. Jer. 9 : 23, 24, John 17 : 3.

2. Confidence in God—"Trust in him alone"—is based on the knowledge that He alone is mighty, faithful and true, and is the firm assurance that what He has promised to us, He also can and will fulfill. Ps. 62 : 11, Isa. 26 : 4, Ps. 118 : 8.

3. "With humility." Only he can trust in God who is conscious of his weakness to help himself, and, therefore, does not at all rely on himself, and at the same

time recognizes his unworthiness, on account of which he can not lay claim to anything. 1 Peter 5: 5.

4. "And patience." Patience is the continuance in confidence in God, even at times and in circumstances when it appears as if God had forgotten us, or was giving us rather the opposite of that which we have asked and expect from Him. Ps. 27: 14; 62: 1, Heb. 10: 36.

5. Hope, in which we "expect all good things from him only" (*i. e.*, confidently await them). Hope is directed to that which lies in the future, and is, therefore, for the time being not yet apparent, although seen and laid hold of as present. James 1: 17, Rom. 5: 5.

6. The love of God: "Love Him with all my heart." Love is the surrender of the heart to another. God alone claims "our whole heart," *i. e.*, undivided love. Prov. 23: 26, "My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes delight in my ways" (the real surrender of the heart to God is shown in this, that we walk in God's ways, *i. e.*, His commandments). Ps. 18: 1, 2.

7. The fear of God: "Fear him with my whole heart." This is no servile fear of punishment, but the recognition of the endless Majesty of God, by which He stands over us, in order that we may humble ourselves before Him, even when He mercifully condescends to us. Ps. 34: 9, Gen. 18: 27.

8. The honor or glorification of God: "Glorify him with my whole heart." Knowing that God alone gives us all good, and works all good in us, we are to glorify Him for the same by acknowledging His mercy, and by testifying thereto in word and deed. Jer. 13: 16, Ps. 29: 2.

B. As the prohibition is introduced with the threat: "As sincerely as I desire the salvation of my own soul," so the conclusion of the commandment points us to the greatness of the love, fear and honor which we owe to

the only true God, "so that I renounce and forsake all creatures, rather than commit even the least thing contrary to his will."

1. There can be nothing in the world that we may love, fear or honor, so as, thereby, to elevate it above God and His commandments; in our love, fear and honor God must have the preference in all things—Love, Luke 14: 26; Fear, Matt. 10: 28; Honor, Acts 5: 29; "Renounce all creatures," Ps. 73: 23-26. The proverb is: "God satisfies."

2. Examples. Abraham at the sacrifice of Isaac, Gen. 22; Moses in Egypt, Heb. 11: 25; Daniel and his three friends, Dan. 3 and 6; Jesus in the temptation, Matt. 4; Paul, Phil. 3: 4-8; the martyrs of the first church and the martyrs of the Reformed Church in the persecutions of the 16th and 17th centuries.

Ursinus says in the treatment of the ten commandments: "The easiest method for the explanation of the particular commandments is to separate that which is commanded in each one into parts as virtues, with the addition of the corresponding vices," as that which is forbidden. For the purposes of instruction in schools, however, it is better to adhere to the method of following word for word the answers of the Catechism. The method of treatment which Ursinus follows is more adapted to catechetical instruction and to catechetical sermons, wherefore we add in condensed form a sample of his method in connection with the first and the third commandment.

Ursinus. 1. "The knowledge of God includes such a conception of the being and character of God as agrees with the revelation He has been pleased to make of Himself in His works and word, and to be moved and stirred by this knowledge to trust, love, fear and worship this one true God. Rom. 10: 14, John 17: 3.

The vices opposed to this virtue are :

a) Ignorance of God and of His will, which is not to know concerning God, or to doubt in reference to those things which we ought to know from the works of creation, and the divine revelation which has been made unto us. Ps. 14 : 2, Rom. 3 : 11, 1 Cor. 2 : 14.

b) Errors or false notions of God, as when some imagine that there is no God, or that there are many gods, as do heathen nations ; or if they do not profess this in word, they nevertheless, in fact, make many gods, by ascribing to creatures those properties which are peculiar to God alone, as the Papists do, who make angels and the spirits of men, who have departed this life, gods ; inasmuch as to address any one in prayer, is to attribute infinite wisdom and power to the person thus invoked. Hence Paul declares (Rom. 1 : 23, 25), that those who pray to creatures “ change the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things.” “ They also change the truth of God into a lie ; whilst they worship and serve the creature more than the Creator.” The same thing may be said of those who profess that they know the true God ; but yet depart from Him, and worship, instead of Him, an idol which they make for themselves : because they imagine the true God other than He has made Himself known in His Word. John 5 : 23, 1 John 2 : 23.

c) Enchantments belong to magic, and consist in the use of certain words and ceremonies, according to an agreement entered into with the devil, according to which he effects what the enchanters ask at his hands, when the words and signs have been gone through with. There is no efficacy or power in the words and ceremonies which are used ; but the devil himself accomplishes what he has promised, with the design, that these persons may fall from God to himself, and

that they may worship him instead of God. The Scriptures now do not only condemn magicians and enchanters themselves, but all those who countenance them by seeking their direction and assistance. Lev. 20: 6, Deut. 18: 11, 12.

d) Superstition. This is to attribute effects to certain, or to particular signs and words, which do not depend upon any physical or political causes, nor upon the word of God.

e) All confidence reposed in creatures, which is evidently opposed to a correct knowledge of God, since he who places his trust in creatures makes for himself many gods. Hence God expressly condemns in His Word all those who repose their confidence either in men, or in power and riches, or in any created object. Avarice, or covetousness, is included in this vice and condemned.

f) Idolatry, which is defined in the 95th Question of the catechism. There are two forms or species of idolatry. One is, when another beside the true God is professedly worshipped, or, when that is worshipped for God which is no god. The first is the more apparent and gross form of idolatry, and belongs properly to the first commandment. The other form of idolatry is when we do not professedly worship another god, but err in the kind of worship we render unto Him, or when the true God is worshipped in a manner different from that which He has prescribed in the second commandment and in various other portions of His Word. This species of idolatry is more subtle and refined, and is condemned in the second commandment. Those who worship God in statues and images are idolaters, notwithstanding they deny that they worship any other being beside the true God.

g) Contempt of God, which is to have a correct knowledge of God without being moved and excited thereby to love and worship Him. Rom. 1: 20, 21.

2. Faith is a firm persuasion, by which we assent to everything which God has revealed to us in His Word, and by which we rest fully assured that the promise of the free mercy of God extends to us for Christ's sake; and is also an assured confidence by which we receive this benefit of God and rest upon it—which confidence the Holy Ghost works by the Gospel in the minds and hearts of the elect, producing in them delight in God, prayer and obedience, according to all the commandments of God. 2 Chron. 20: 20.

a) There is opposed to faith on the side of want, 1. Unbelief, which includes a rejection of what is heard and known respecting God. 2. Doubt, which is, neither firmly to assent to the doctrine concerning God, nor yet wholly to reject it. 3. Diffidence, or distrust. This does not apply to itself the knowledge which it has of God and His promises. 1 John 5: 10. 4. Hypocritical and temporary faith. This endureth only for a while. Matt. 13: 20, Acts 8: 13.

b) Those things, on the other hand, which are opposed to faith on the side of excess, include, 1. Tempting God, which consists in departing from the word and order of God, and so to presume upon, or to make a trial of His truth and power and to provoke Him to anger. Deut. 6: 16, Matt. 4: 7, 1 Cor. 10: 9, 22. 2. Carnal security, which is to live without any thought of God and His will, or of our own infirmity and danger, without acknowledging and deploring our sinfulness and without the fear of God, and yet to expect and hope at the same time for deliverance from punishment and the wrath of God. Matt. 24: 37–39.

3. Hope. This is a sure and certain expectation of eternal life, to be given freely for the sake of Christ, with the expectation of a mitigation of present evils with a deliverance from them, according to the counsel and will of God. 1 Peter 1: 13, Rom. 5: 5; 8: 24; 12: 12, Heb. 11: 1.

a) That which is opposed to hope, as it respects the want thereof, is, 1. Despair, Gen. 4 : 13 ; 2. Doubt in reference to future benefits.

b) As it regards the opposite side of hope, or that which is opposed thereto by reason of excess, we may make mention of carnal security.

4. The love of God consists in acknowledging Him to be good and merciful in the highest degree, and that not only in Himself, but also towards us, and therefore to love Him supremely—to desire more earnestly to be united and conformed to Him, and to have His will accomplished in us, than to enjoy all things beside, and to be willing to suffer the loss of all things, which we have, sooner than be deprived of His favor. There is opposed to the love of God, on the side of want, 1. A rejection of the love of God, or a contempt and hatred to God. Rom. 8 : 7 ; 2. An inordinate love of self, and of other creatures. Matt. 10 : 37.

5. The fear of God is to acknowledge His infinite wrath against sin, His power to punish it, and to be willing to suffer all other things sooner than offend God in the smallest matter.

6. Humility is to acknowledge that all the good which is in us and done by us, does not proceed from any worthiness or excellency which we possess, but from the free goodness of God, and so by an acknowledgment of the divine majesty and our own weakness and unworthiness, to submit ourselves to God, to ascribe the glory of all the good which is in us to Him alone. 1 Cor. 4 : 7, 1 Peter 5 : 5, Matt. 19 : 4, Phil. 2 : 3.

The opposite of humility, as it respects the want of this virtue, is,

a) Pride, or arrogance. Prov. 16 : 5.

b) A feigned modesty or humility is the opposite of this virtue, as it respects the other extreme. Matt. 6 : 16.

7. Patience consists in obeying God and submitting to Him under the various evils and adversities which He sends upon us and desires us to endure, arising from a knowledge of the wisdom, providence, justness and goodness of God—does not murmur against God on account of the sufferings to which these evils expose us, and does nothing contrary to His command. Ps. 37: 7, 34.

The opposite of patience, on the side of want, is impatience. Thoughtlessness or rashness is the opposite of patience on the side of excess.

We may here remark, “that often in this and other commandments the same vices are opposed to many and different virtues. So in this commandment carnal security stands opposed to faith, hope and the fear of God; tempting God is opposed to hope, the love of God, humility and patience; whilst idolatry is utterly at variance with a true knowledge of God and faith. The same thing may be seen, and should be observed in the virtues and vices of other commandments.”

Question 96.

What doth God require in the second command?

That we in no wise represent God by images, nor worship him in any other way than he has commanded in his word.

In the first commandment God enjoins that we should acknowledge and worship Him alone, and that we should have no other gods beside Him; in the second commandment, that we should not worship Him by means of pictures or images.

I. What is Forbidden.

Every form of idolatry is forbidden.

1. Especially image-worship, “that we in no wise represent God by images.” Under which are to be distinguished

a) A grosser and b) a more refined form.

a) Gross image-worship consists in making an image of God and worshipping it as the heathen worship their gods in pictures and statues. Deut. 4 : 23, 24, Heb. 12 : 29, Rom. 1 : 22, 23, Ps. 97 : 7.

b) A more refined image-worship consists in forming false conceptions or mental pictures of God. Col. 1 : 15, John 14 : 9, 2 Cor. 15 : 16.

c) The Church Father St. Augustine says : “ We believe that Christ sits at the right hand of God the Father. But no one is to suppose that God the Father has a human form, or has a right and a left side, or that when one speaks of His sitting, that reference is made to a bodily position, that we may not fall into the same blasphemy, on account of which Paul declares that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against those who have “ changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, etc. For it would be an inexpressible dishonor to set up such an image of God in a church among Christians ; and it would be still more dishonorable to cherish such thoughts of God in the heart.”

Bishop Hilary of Poitiers (died 368) says : “ It is as wicked to make an image of God as it is to deny Him.”

The following forms of idolatry are also to be condemned :

2. The worship of objects, which are represented to have been in contact with the body of Christ, as the so-called “ holy coat” of Treves, nails of the cross of Christ, etc.

3. Ceremonialism, in which the thought is that God is to be worshipped in outward acts, such as burning incense, removing the hat before pictures, by means of processions, etc. Acts 17 : 24, 25.

4. Meritorious works, when one devotes himself to works of the law, as meritorious in the sight of God, and minimizes the merits of Christ, or when one wishes

to merit salvation without Christ by one's own virtues or good works. Gal. 3 : 10 (Deut. 27 : 26).

5. Lip-service, when one prays and sings and speaks piously without living faith in the heart. Matt. 15 : 7, 8.

II. What is Commanded.

The worship which is required of us is "that we in no wise represent God by images, nor worship Him in any other way than He has commanded in His word, *i. e.*, worshipping Him *a*) publicly, in the family and in the closet, by prayer and by meditation upon His word; and *b*) in our public and private life. Deut. 12 : 32. The command in His word is, that we should worship Him in spirit and in truth. John 4 : 24, 1 Tim. 2 : 8.

We may also cite the brazen serpent, which God Himself had commanded to be set up, for the confirmation of faith in His promises (Num. 21), but which was destroyed by the pious king Hezekiah (2 Kings 18 : 4), as it had been misused for idolatry.

Question 97.

Are images then not at all to be made ?

God neither can nor may be represented by any means; but as to creatures, though they may be represented, yet God forbids us to make, or have any resemblance of them, either in order to worship them, or to serve God by them.

1. God must not, because He cannot, be represented.

a) He is spirit and invisible, and nothing in the world can serve the purpose, even in a slight degree only of symbolically presenting or representing Him. John 4 : 24, Rom. 1 : 20, John 1 : 18, Isa. 46 : 5.

b) Man does not need the help of an image to realize God's presence, as He is Himself everywhere present. Acts 17 : 27, 28.

c) Objection is made that in the Old Testament God appeared, *e. g.*, to Abraham, in human form, and, therefore, might also be represented in human form, especially since man also is created in the image of God. The reply to this is: 1. That we are no longer under the old covenant, where God revealed Himself by visible manifestations; 2. That we have no picture of such a manifestation of God; 3. That the creation of man in the image of God is not to be understood of the outward form of man (Eph. 4: 24). Acts 17: 29, "Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device." This is true not only of the idols of the heathen, but also of the representations which we make in our thoughts of the only true God.

d) It is further said: Christ at least we may and can represent by means of pictures, since He appeared in the flesh and became in form like other men. To this the reply is that we have even no picture of Christ; for the tradition that the Evangelist Luke, who, it must be remembered, was not a painter, but a physician (Col. 4: 14), made a picture of Christ from the impression of His face upon the handkerchief of Veronica (which, besides, is not known to exist), is a Romish fable. When a painter or a sculptor makes a picture of Christ, he does not follow any particular model, but rather his own fancy. It may be then "like another man," but it is not a picture of Christ as He appeared in the flesh.

2. Not in any sense, however, are the plastic arts, painting and sculpture, forbidden to Christians. "Creatures (all created things) may (can) be represented by pictures."

For God Himself, already under the old covenant, filled men with His spirit and with wisdom to do all manner of work and to devise curious works. Ex. 35: 30-35. But no abuse is to be made of such pictures, "to worship them, or to serve God by them." As everything human, so also the plastic arts, which are not indebted to Christianity for their origin, are to be brought within its sphere and are to be permeated by its spirit. We may honor true artists, may find joy in their works and adorn our walls with good pictures. But in this connection it is also to be remembered how much harm is done to the souls of the young and old by poor, and at the same time unchaste pictures, which excite sensual desires. The young ought to be warned sincerely and earnestly against such pictures, in order that their imagination may not poison the entire life, at an age when the impressions are the most lasting, and other temptations may, thereby, become so much the more dangerous.

Zwingli. "Pictures which are not used for purposes of worship, or in connection with which it is not to be feared that they will be used for this purpose, I do not reject; on the contrary, I recognize painting and sculpture as gifts of God."

Calvin (in the Geneva Catechism): "It is not to be understood that these words reject all painting and sculpture; we are only forbidden to make pictures for the purpose of seeking or worshipping God by them, or, which amounts to the same thing, to worship them to the honor of God, or misuse them, in any manner whatsoever, superstitiously for idolatrous purposes."

Question 98.

But may not images be tolerated in the churches, as books to the laity?

No; for we must not pretend to be wiser than God, who will have his people taught, not by dumb images, but by the lively preaching of his word.

1. The use of pictures in churches is defended even by the Lutherans, on the ground (to use an expression of Gregory) that they are "lay-books," *i. e.*, that the common people are instructed and edified by them. The Romish Church makes a distinction between the "laity" and "the clergy," *i. e.*, between the people and the clergy or priesthood, a distinction which does not hold under the new covenant. 1 Peter 2: 9. Under the new covenant the knowledge of God is to be imparted to all believers in the same way, by means of God's word and spirit. John 6: 45, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Jer. 31: 34, "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

2. In school, pictures may be used to fix the attention for purposes of instruction, but in churches, devotion is disturbed, rather than furthered, by pictures. There are "dumb idols," with which to-day yet the worst abuses are practiced in large parts of Christendom. Think of the many "pictures of saints" and of the "pictures of the Virgin Mary," which are represented as working miracles in all lands, from which the laity in large numbers seek help year after year. Hab. 2: 18-20.

3. "We must not pretend to be wiser than God," and, therefore, must not seek any other means of knowledge than He Himself has ordained. He "will have his people taught by the lively preaching of his word." Where this is vigorously prosecuted, no other means of instruction or edification are needed in the churches; but the more this is neglected, or the people turn against it, the more is satisfaction sought in outward things, such as pictures, crucifixes, etc. The Church father Hieronymus already complained (died 420): "When the Church still used wooden cups (at the communion), it had golden bishops; now it uses golden cups and has wooden bishops." Let us not be disturbed by the reproach that our Reformed churches are "bare" and our worship "barren." The most beautiful ornament of a Christian church is the "lively preaching of the word of God" and a living congregation. Ps. 93: 5, "Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, forever."

4. With the secularization of the Church at the beginning of the Middle Ages, pictures were given a place in the houses of worship, notwithstanding the opposition of many earnest-minded men. Of this we still have evidence in the Church father Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis (died 403).

In a letter to Bishop John of Jerusalem, which Hieronymus recommends to the attention of the churches, he writes: "When we went together to the sacred place of Bethlehem, in order, according to Christian custom, to gather alms there (a collecting tour), and I came into a village named Anablatha, and, in passing through, saw a light burning, I asked what kind of a place that was. When I heard that it was a church, I entered to pray. I found at the church door a colored curtain with a picture of Christ or of some saint painted on it. I cannot recall definitely whom it was to repre-

sent. When I saw hanging in a Christian church, contrary to the command of the Scriptures, the picture of a man, I tore it down, and gave those present the advice that they should rather wrap and bury in it the body of some poor person. I pray you to inform the ministers of that place to accept from the bearers of this letter another curtain, which we hereby send, and command, that in the future such curtains, as are contrary to the Christian religion, be not used in the Christian churches. For it belongs to the responsibilities of your office that you should guard against the commission of such offences, which are unbecoming to the Christian Church and the people entrusted to you."

Question 99

What is required in the third command?

That we, not only by cursing, or perjury, but also by rash swearing, must not profane or abuse the name of God, nor by silence or connivance be partakers of these horrible sins in others; and briefly, that we use the holy name of God no otherwise than with fear and reverence; so that he may be rightly confessed, and worshipped by us, and be glorified in all our words and works.

Question 100

Is then the profaning of God's name, by swearing and cursing, so heinous a sin, that his wrath is kindled against those who do not endeavor, as much as in them lies, to prevent and forbid such cursing and swearing?

It undoubtedly is; for there is no sin greater or more provoking to God than the profaning of his name, and therefore he has commanded this sin to be punished with death.

I. What is Forbidden.

1. A name is a word used to characterize a person, or an object, visible or invisible. The names of God represent

a) The Person of God ("God," "the Lord," "Father," "Son," "Holy Ghost").

b) His Being ("the Eternal," "the Almighty"), and

c) His revelation in Creation (in the words "heaven," the "elements," "thunder," "lightning"), and in grace ("cross," "sacrament").

2. The name of God is "holy," *i. e.*, it is given to us only for the use for which God intended it, and, therefore, when it is blasphemed, *i. e.*, when anything unseemly or offensive is spoken concerning God, or when it is taken in vain, *i. e.*, used falsely, God will not look with allowance upon such wickedness, but will punish it according to His holiness and justice. "The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." Ex. 5: 2.

3. The name of God is blasphemed and taken in vain:

a) By swearing. By this we mean to wish ill to oneself or to others by the use of the name of God or of His creatures. Likewise it is swearing when the name of God or of His creatures is used to express anger or astonishment. Swearing is not weakened, as is imagined, by changing the oaths so that the words have a different sound.

In explaining this subject to children, one needs to guard himself against being the means of bringing oaths to their knowledge. It is better to limit oneself to such oaths as have already been noticed among them, or are known to be in common use among the people. Lev. 24: 15, Prov. 21: 10, James 3: 8-10, Rom. 12: 14.

But has not God Himself made use of the oath, and have not the prophets done the same in His name? *e. g.*, "cursed is the ground" (Gen. 3: 17), "cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them" (Deut. 27: 26), "cursed be the man that trusteth in man" (Jer. 17: 5), etc. Such "cursing" is the threatening or the suspending over human sin

of God's righteous punishment, which punishment itself is, on this account, also called a curse. This is something entirely different from man's cursing.

Again, how are we to explain the so-called "imprecatory Psalms," which invoke evil upon enemies, *e. g.*, Ps. 35, 69, 109, etc.? In these there is no reference to personal enemies, but to the enemies of God and of His kingdom, who hate and threaten to destroy the righteous on account of their acknowledgment of God. They, therefore, pray to God for help and for His judgment upon the wicked.

Example of a swearer : Shimei, 2 Sam. 16 : 5-8.

b) By perjury. The oath is an affirmation by the invocation of God's name. Whoever makes an affirmation that is not in accordance with fact, either by not telling the truth or by breaking a promise, has sworn falsely or committed perjury. Lev. 19 : 12.

c) By unnecessary swearing, *i. e.*, through frivolous affirmations, either in statements or promises, by invoking the name of God in daily life or habitually. Lev. 5 : 4, Matt. 5 : 34-37. It is evident that Jesus forbids in these passages unnecessary swearing in daily life, and not the oath in general. This is indicated by the language in which He refers to the daily life, and in which He does not include an oath in the name of God. His followers are to be so established in the truth that a simple yea or nay, without an affirmation, suffices ; "yea, yea, nay, nay," *i. e.*, a yea that is really yea, and a nay that is really nay. Misleading expressions are also forbidden.

d) Of this character is also the misuse of God's name, which occurs 1) When it is spoken thoughtlessly. 2) When it is used hypocritically in order to appear pious, or in the mumbling of prayers by rote. Matt. 6 : 7. 3) When Scripture is used in jest.

e) By silence and connivance, whereby "we are par-

takers of these horrible sins in others," because he who listens to and connives at these sins, to say the least, awakens the suspicion that he does not disapprove of them. Lev. 5 : 1, Prov. 29 : 24, Eph. 5 : 11.

II. What Is Commanded.

Over against the prohibition stands the command, viz., that we are to use the name of God properly, as is becoming toward a holy God, and for the purpose for which He has revealed His name. Ex. 3 : 15.

a) We are to use it with "fear and reverence," for it is the name of the almighty and holy God. The expressions, "our dear God" or "the good Lord," are more childish than childlike, and tend to produce enfeebling conceptions of God; they ought not to be used. Isa. 8 : 13, Matt. 10 : 28, Mal. 4 : 2.

b) The name of God is "rightly confessed by us" if by the use of it, in the presence of friend and foe, we openly show that He is our God, and that we are His children in Christ Jesus. We are not through the fear of man to hesitate to name the name of God, and, instead, speak in a general way about "heaven;" which amounts to denying God and to be ashamed of Him. Matt. 10 : 32, 33, 1 Peter 3 : 15, Rom. 10 : 10.

c) The name of God is "rightly worshipped by us," if we speak with Him in prayer, or call to Him for help in need. Rom. 10 : 13, Ps. 50 : 15.

d) The name of God "is glorified in all our words and works," when all our words and deeds conform to His will and pleasure, and we, who are called by His name, show, thereby, that His power dwells in us. Col. 3 : 17, 1 Peter 2 : 9.

III. The Heinousness of Blasphemy.

1. There is no greater sin than to blaspheme the name of God in any of the above-mentioned ways; for

a) It is a personal insult to Almighty God.

b) He has pronounced against it in His law the heaviest penalties. Lev. 24 : 16.

c) He has Himself added to the third commandment the special threat : “ the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.”

2. Therefore all—every individual, but especially Christian governments,—are bound, as much as possible, to assist in preventing this terrible sin and to forbid it. (In earlier times it was punished with death in Christian countries.)

Question 101.

May we then swear religiously by the name of God ?

Yes ; either when the magistrates demand it of the subjects, or when necessity requires us thereby to confirm fidelity and truth, to the glory of God, and the safety of our neighbor ; for such an oath is founded on God’s word, and therefore was justly used by the saints, both in the old and new testament.

Question 102.

May we also swear by saints, or any other creatures ?

No ; for a lawful oath is a calling upon God, as the one who knows the heart, that he will bear witness to the truth, and punish me if I swear falsely ; which honor is due to no creature.

I. What Kind of Oaths are to be Allowed.

The name of God is taken in vain by false oaths or frivolous swearing, but neither the third commandment nor the sermon on the mount (Matt. 5 : 34–37) forbids the general use of the name of God in oaths. A proper oath is rather a religious matter, a divine act. The question with reference to such an oath is, how it has been occasioned and what is its object ?

1. The occasion. Oaths are allowed under two circumstances :

a) “ When the magistrates demand it of their subjects.” Ex. 22 : 10, 11, Ezra 10 : 5, Rom. 13 : 1, 4.

b) "When necessity requires it of us," but only for the purpose of maintaining and furthering fidelity and truth. The necessity for the oath rests chiefly upon the corruption which prevails among men. Ps. 116: 11. But a necessity for swearing without a summons of the government in individual cases can be justified only when specially important matters are involved, in which "truth and fidelity to the glory of God are thereby confirmed." Heb. 6: 16.

2. The oath must be to the glory of God and for the safety of our neighbor.

a) "To the glory of God." Deut. 10: 20, 2 Chron. 15: 14.

b) To the safety of our neighbor." Josh 2: 12; 9: 15.

3. "Such an oath is founded on God's word" and the example of "the saints, both in the Old and the New Testament."

a) "On God's Word." Deut. 6: 13, Isa. 45: 23. God Himself made use of the oath. Gen. 22: 16, Ps. 110: 4, Heb. 6: 17 (v. 16: "For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife." Therefore God swears by Himself, because there is no one greater than He is).

b) "Such an oath was justly used by the saints, both in the Old and the New Testament." In the Old Testament: Abraham, Gen. 14: 22; 24: 3; Isaac, Gen. 26: 31; Jacob, Gen. 31: 53; David, 1 Sam. 24: 22. In the New Testament: Paul, Rom. 9: 1. Christ made use of the oath when the government, the high-priest and necessity required it to confirm the truth that He was the Son of God. Matt. 26: 63, 64. The form of the oath among the Jews differed from that in use among us, since the judge pronounced the form of the oath,—“I adjure thee by the living God”—and in the same way the one sworn, responded to what was to

be confirmed: "Thou sayest it, it is so, *i. e.*, I confirm it."

II. What a Lawful Oath Is.

"Lawful," *i. e.*, allowed, and to be recognized as legal and valid is only an oath that is sworn in the name of God.

1. The lawful oath is

a) Calling upon God. Isa. 65: 16, 2 Cor. 1: 23.

b) "As the only one who knows the heart" (the all-knowing One), who alone knows the secrets of the heart, that He will bear witness to the truth, *i. e.*, as a witness vouch for the truth of a declaration or of a promise. 1 Kings 8: 39.

c) As the highest judge (the Almighty), "who will punish me if I swear falsely." Deut. 32: 35.

2. The oath is therefore (briefly): the calling upon God as a witness to the truth, and as the avenger of untruth.

3. An oath can be taken only before God as the all-knowing One (searcher of hearts) and the Almighty (judge), and, therefore, not before "saints or any other creatures," because to them does not belong such honor as is involved in an invocation, which implies that the one invoked is almighty and omniscient. Jer. 5: 7.

4. When truth and fidelity, to which God is summoned as witness, are broken through untruth and unfaithfulness, under the first circumstances there is sworn a false oath or perjury is committed, and in the second the oath taken is broken. When in testifying, something is definitely affirmed of which one is not quite certain, and which subsequently proves untrue, one has committed heedless perjury. It is also to be considered a false oath when one makes silent reservations, by which violence is done to the truth as a whole, or when one uses misleading expressions. By

such a course Almighty God is mocked. "Rather lose money and possessions than to swear falsely." (Prov. 19: 12, Prov. 6: 19, Gal. 6: 7.)

5. A lawful oath must be kept inviolable, even when one suffers danger or loss thereby. Num. 30: 2. But a wicked oath, *i. e.*, one in which a man has committed himself to do what is sinful, dare not be kept, because it involves a two-fold sin, both in the promise and in the act. An example of what one is not to do under such circumstances, is found in Herod, Matt. 14: 7-10. On the contrary, an example of the opposite kind, which teaches us what to do, is found in David, who in excitement had sworn death against Nabal and against all his household, but did not execute his oath. 1 Sam. 25: 22, 32-34.

6. The different kinds of oaths. Either a declaration or a promise is confirmed by an oath; the former, which concerns the "truth," is called an oath of testimony, and the latter, which relates to fidelity, is called an oath of obligation. This again is manifold: the oath of submission and allegiance, the oath to one's colors, and the official oath; the oath which is taken by the members of an assembly, of the Diet and the Synods. A ruler of a country, when he enters upon his office, takes the oath of fidelity to the constitution of the country.

7. The outward form in taking the oath. The one swearing holds up the right hand, the palm of the hand being turned toward the face, to indicate thereby that he invokes God in heaven upon his soul. In the other cases, when the right hand is raised, the first three fingers (the thumb, index and middle finger) are extended, and the other two are bent inward, to indicate that the Triune God is invoked, and that both body and soul are pledged. Formerly the left hand was at the same time laid upon the Bible.

8. At the side of the oath stands the vow, which is a promise not bound to any distinct form. Of the highest character is the vow by the joining of hands, and the pledge "instead of an oath"; then the vow in general, whether it be to God or man. A vow to God is made, *e. g.*, in confirmation, a vow before God unto men in the wedding ceremony, the promise of marital love and fidelity even unto death. Ps. 50 : 14, Eccles. 5 : 2, 4.

Examples : Jacob at Bethel, Gen. 28 : 20-22 ; Hannah, 1 Sam. 1 : 11, 27, 28.

Question 103.

What doth God require in the fourth command ?

First, that the ministry of the gospel and the schools be maintained ; and that I, especially on the Sabbath, that is, on the day of rest, diligently frequent the church of God, to hear his word, to use the sacraments, publicly to call upon the Lord, and contribute to the relief of the poor, as becomes a Christian. Secondly, that all the days of my life I cease from my evil works, and yield myself to the Lord, to work by his Holy Spirit in me, and thus begin in this life the eternal Sabbath.

I. Sabbath and Sunday.

1. To hallow the Sabbath means to separate the day appointed for rest (Hebrew, Sabbath) from the remaining days of the week, so that ordinary business avocations may be omitted on the one day, and the congregation may assemble for public worship.

2. For Israel the Sabbath had a three-fold significance—ceremonial, social and moral.

a) Ceremonial. 1. It was a sign under the old covenant. Ex. 31 : 17, "It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever." Therefore, verse 15, "whosoever doeth any work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death."

2. It served as a reminder of the creation, of the departure of Israel out of Egypt, and of the giving of the law at Sinai.

3. It was intended for religious gatherings.

b) Social. 1. The rest, beginning regularly on the seventh day, was to afford to the body and the soul necessary relaxation and refreshing, in order that man might not succumb under his labors. 2. For those who served (son and daughter, man-servant and maid-servant, also the stranger, the non-Israelite, and the cattle) the command was to afford protection against the exhaustion of their physical powers and against exaction. The Sabbath was to be a blessing from God to the laborer. Mark 2 : 27.

c) Moral. It was to prevent man's being submerged by the earthly life, and to incite him to seek the higher gifts of life in communion with God.

3. Neither were the Israelites forbidden by this command to perform works of necessity and charity. Compare the plucking of the ears of corn by the disciples, in order to satisfy their hunger, Mark 2 : 23, and the healings on the Sabbath day wrought by Christ, Mark 3 : 1, Luke 14 : 1.

4. All the ceremonies of the old covenant were only shadows, types of Christ, and of the blessings of the new covenant. Col. 2 : 16, 17, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy-day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days : which are a shadow of the things to come ; but the body is of Christ." In this sense is Christ's word to be understood, Mark 2 : 28, "The Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath." And by His rest in the grave on the seventh day, the Sabbath, so far as its ceremonial significance is concerned, has been fulfilled and abolished, as well as circumcision, the passover, etc.

5. On this account the Christian Church was free to appoint, instead of the last day (the seventh), the first day of the week as a day of rest and freedom, as well as the day on which the congregation was to serve the Lord, thus making it the Lord's day. Here also is to

be found the ground on which ceremonial days and times were set aside with the ceremonial institutions, because in many instances the people still clung too readily to these externals, and sought help in them. Gal. 4: 9, 10.

6. The New Testament furnishes the clearest evidence that Christians already in the times of the apostles observed the first day of the week, Sunday, as a day of assembly. Acts 20: 7. (compare Acts 2: 42, 46), 1 Cor. 16: 2, Rev. 1: 10.

7. As was the Old Testament Sabbath, so also is our Sabbath a memorial day (remember the Sabbath day) of creation, and of redemption—the former from Egypt, the latter by Christ from sin.

a) On the first day of the week and of the world God created light. Gen. 1: 3, 5.

b) On the first day of the week Christ arose. Mark 16: 2.

8. The social significance of the Sabbath as a protection of the working classes against the exhaustion of their physical powers has passed over to Sunday.

II. Religious Worship.

1. The holyday (*i. e.*, Sunday and other religious holidays) finds its chief significance in the observance of public worship; participation in which is a duty for the individual, and in turn becomes to him a blessing.

2. Therefore, it is according to the will of God “that the ministry of the gospel and the schools be maintained.”

a) The ministry of the gospel and schools serve for the instruction of adults and youths in true doctrine unto holiness.

1) The ministry of the gospel was instituted by Christ, individual ministers are called by men. Eph. 4: 11, Tit. 1: 5.

2) Schools are the nurseries of the Church. Their most important function is to give religious instruction by means of biblical history and the catechism. This is supplemented by Christian training. Schools are not independent institutions of the same rank with the State and the Church. They are entrusted with the training of the members, for a certain length of time, of both Church and State, and, in reality, stand in the relation of helps to the parent, upon whom, first of all, rests the obligation to instruct and train his children. Deut. 6 : 7, Gen. 18 : 19, Ex. 13 : 8, 14.

Three factors have a right in the schools : The State, the Church, and the parents. The school is an institution of the State, and its duty is to see that the school educates good citizens. It is the duty and the privilege of the Church, which first established schools, to see to it that the children are not taught infidel and false doctrine, but that they are instructed and trained according to the doctrines of the Church to which they belong. Parents also have a right in the matter, because to them has been given by God the nearest right to their children, which no civil law can take away from them.

b) Schools are to be maintained.

1) The authorities in State and Church must take their maintenance to heart, because the ministry of the gospel and schools are of the greatest importance to the true culture and civilization of the people. Isa. 49 : 23.

2) Provision must be made for the education of ministers and teachers. 2 Tim. 2 : 2.

3) The churches must furnish the means for the support of ministers and teachers, and for the needs of churches and schools. 1 Cor. 9 : 14, Gal. 6 : 6.

3. The most important function of the ministry of the gospel is to conduct religious services, and it is the duty of the members of the congregation to take part

in the same, "diligently frequent the church of God." Heb. 10: 25. The several parts of public religious services are, as in the early Church, so also in the Reformed Church:

a) To preach and to learn (not merely hear) the Word of God. Luke 11: 28, Rom. 10: 17, Eccles 5: 1. Only passages from the canonical scriptures are to be used as texts for sermons; in the same way sermons on the catechism (the Heidelberg) must be based upon passages of Scripture.

b) "To use the sacraments." By this is meant not merely participation in the holy supper, but also that baptism be performed, as is the order of the Reformed Church, in the church before the congregation, so that it also may have a part in the service, and that adults may be reminded anew of their baptismal covenant. Acts 20: 7, "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread (to celebrate the Lord's Supper, compare Acts 2: 42), Paul preached unto them."

c) "Publicly to call upon the Lord" (in distinction from family worship). This is done by prayer, which the minister offers or reads, and which every one is to offer in common with him; and by the singing of the congregation. Acts 1: 14, Ps. 68: 26, Eph. 5: 19, Amos 5: 23. As the first Christians sang only psalms, so the Reformed Church has especially fostered the singing of psalms.

d) "Contribute to the relief of the poor." In this are included also other collections which are taken for Church purposes or for other needy objects. In Church collections it is proper to contribute more than the so-called "Church dollar," *i. e.*, one penny. The poor widow (Mark 12: 41-44) put indeed only a mite into the treasury, but it was, as the Lord said, all her substance, *i. e.*, all the money she had, and which she

needed for her subsistence, she gave. 1 Cor. 16 : 2, 2 Cor. 9 : 7, Gal. 6 : 10. "Christian almsgiving" is proper not only at the ordinary Sunday and festival services, but also at the services of missionary and Gustavus Adolphus Societies. (The word "alms" is derived from the Greek word, meaning "mercy.")

4. But public religious services do not constitute the entire holyday ; to these must be added edification at home, by reading, singing, praying and godly conversation in the family circle or with friends. Col. 3 : 16.

5. The rest of the body from earthly labor and the rest of the soul in God, as well as the work of God in the hearts of His children, constitute the holyday and the real Sabbath joy. Ps. 84 : 1, 2.

6. It is the duty of Christian governments to provide for Sabbath rest, and to secure immunity from hindrances and offences against such rest. For Sabbath observance Christians themselves must provide. This must be done, not by police authority, but by custom ; and where this has lost its power, it must again be restored. Above all, believing Christians are not to make the day of the Lord a day of pleasure and of feasting, nor are they to participate in worldly entertainments. Eph. 5 : 15, Rom. 12 : 2.

7. Already in the first century the churches commenced to celebrate special festivals on particular Sabbaths or on other days, to commemorate the mighty acts of God : The Christmas festival, which is preceded by Advent ; the Easter festival, preceded by passion week and Good Friday ; the Feast of Pentecost, and between this and the Easter festival, Ascension Day. To this have been added in the Protestant Church, the fast-days and days of prayer, and the Reformation festival. A large part of the Reformed Church celebrates only the Sabbath, others (in Switzerland and Germany) have also retained the traditional festival

days. But in no wise must the proclamation of the mighty deeds of God be limited to the special festivals, which are celebrated in their remembrance. Ps. 96: 2.

8. Christian worship in the times of the apostles was not associated with the temple worship of the whole congregation of Israel, but as the arrangement of elders was derived from the synagogue, the individual congregation, so also was the order of service, in which the word of God formed the centre. When the hierarchy of the Middle Ages found their types in the high-priests and priests of the old covenant, and a new "sacrifice" in the mass was invented, a new temple service with altars and consecrations was established in the Christian Church.

The Reformed Church establishes its order of worship upon the Scriptures and upon the usage of the first Christian congregations. There is especially one passage of Scripture which contains the different parts of the apostolic church service, Acts 2: 42: "And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine (preaching), and fellowship (participation in alms-giving), and in breaking of bread (the use of the sacraments), and in prayers (to which also belonged singing)."

From the beginning there has prevailed in the Reformed Church a certain freedom with reference to the several parts of church worship, which, however, has been ruled throughout by the law of simplicity; thus, *e. g.*, in the Swiss and the French Directory of Worship the confession of sin stood first, in the Palatinate, at the end. The true order of the different parts which have found a place in the services of the Reformed Church, is as follows: 1. Singing. 2. Confession of sin and gracious consolation (announcement of forgiveness). 3. Prayer. 4. Reading of Scripture. (5. Apostles' Creed.) 6. Singing. 7. Sermon. 8. Prayer and

the Lord's Prayer. 9. Singing. 10. Celebration of the sacraments. 11. Benediction.

III. The Eternal Sabbath.

1. It would be a gross perversion to think that when due respect has been shown to the Sabbath or Sunday, it is not necessary on the other days of the week to give such close attention to a godly life. The Christian is to be the same in his working clothes as in his Sunday garments. As in this life already we have in our hearts the beginning of that eternal joy, which after this life will be perfect, so here already we begin with the new life in God, the eternal Sabbath.

2. The beginning of the eternal Sabbath in this life consists in this :

a) "That all the days of my life I cease from my evil works." Isa. 58: 13, Rom. 12: 1, 1 Peter 2: 11, James 1: 22, 27.

b) "That I yield myself to the Lord to work by His Holy Spirit in me." For otherwise we cannot cease from our evil works, which alone is not sufficient, for we are also to do good works, to which the Spirit of God impels and strengthens us. A means to this end is daily family worship, morning and evening, or at least at one of these periods of the day, in connection with the reading of the divine Word and prayer, and, if possible, also with singing. Gal. 5: 16, 18.

3. The perfection of the eternal Sabbath will be found in the life beyond, when we shall be free from all sin, and from all the troubles and miseries of the present life, and shall praise God and serve Him in perfect righteousness and holiness forever. But no one will attain this perfect state who has not made the beginning here. Heb. 4: 9, 11.

Question 104

What doth God require in the fifth command ?

That I show all honor, love and fidelity to my father and mother, and all in authority over me, and submit myself to their good instruction and correction with due obedience; and also patiently bear with their weakness and infirmities, since it pleases God to govern us by their hand.

I. THE DUTIES OF SUBJECTS TO SUPERIORS.**A. Duties of Children to Parents.**

1. The fifth commandment, with which the "second table" of the law begins, treats in the first place of the duties of children to their parents ("father and mother" are mentioned), and all who stand in the same relation as these to children, such as grand-parents, step-parents and adopted parents, older relations and guardians.

2. To them is to be shown :

a) "All honor." This consists in heartily esteeming parents, and manifesting such esteem outwardly in acts of respect. Ex. 21: 15, 17. Modesty and respect are due from youths to all older people. Lev. 19: 32.

b) "All love," *i. e.*, hearty affection and attachment. This manifests itself in an obliging disposition, which prompts children to do any favors for their parents which they know would please them, in praying for them and in not allowing any one to alienate them from, nor to incite them against their parents. Matt. 10: 37. From this passage it will be seen that children are to love their parents more than all others, and that this love is inferior only to that due to the Lord.

c) "All fidelity." Children are to have confidence in their parents, believing that these mean well with them, even when they themselves cannot understand the matter. They are not to rob them of anything, but rather shield them from harm, and render them help and support whenever possible. Prov. 28: 24.

d) "Obedience," in that "I submit myself to their good instruction and correction with due obedience," and without contradiction or obstinacy. By instruction is to be understood all direction, as well as all commands and orders which parents give to their children; by correction, discipline and reproof, which are administered to children on account of improper conduct or disobedience. Prov. 1: 8; 15: 5, Col. 3: 20.

It is the duty of the child to submit to punishment without resistance, even when the same appears to it unjust. So far as "instruction" is concerned, *i. e.*, that which the child is bidden to do by the parents, it is his duty to submit only to "good instruction." If anything should be asked of the child, which is against God's commandment, and, therefore, evil, the child must be governed by the law: "We must obey God rather than men." As it unfortunately happens that school children are occasionally instigated by their parents to petty thieving, to deception and lying, and to other sins, we cannot for any reason avoid emphasizing the idea of "good" instruction. But great care must be exercised in this matter.

e) "Patiently" bear with the infirmities of parents. Not only when they are sick and old, and at the same time peevish, but also in days of health, when they become capricious, irritable or angry, the child must not rise up against them. Prov. 30: 17; 23: 22. The child also must not despise its parents when they fail in leading a godly life. Compare Noah and his sons, Gen. 9: 21-27.

B. Duties to All Superiors.

"All in authority over me." To this class belong: For domestics, their governors; for apprentices and journeymen, their masters; for children and adults, teachers, ministers and elders; and for all subjects, great and small, those in authority of every kind.

1. Servants, apprentices and journeymen are to show : Honor. 1 Tim. 6 : 1.—Fidelity and obedience. Tit. 2 : 9, 10, Col. 3 : 22.—Patience. 1 Peter 2 : 18.

2. Children and adults are to show toward teachers, ministers and elders : Honor. 1 Tim. 5 : 17.—Love. 1 Thess. 5 : 12, 13.—Obedience. Heb. 13 : 17.

3. Subjects are to show toward those in authority over them : Honor. 1 Peter 2 : 17.—Love. 1 Tim. 2 : 1, 2.—Fidelity. Matt. 22 : 21.—Obedience. Rom. 13 : 1, 2, Tit. 3 : 1.—Patience. Rom. 13 : 5.

4. In all these relations it is always true that the authority of God, whose commands take precedence of all others, stands above all human authority. Acts 5 : 29.

C. The Basis of These Duties.

The demand for the respect and obedience of children and subjects toward parents and superiors rests upon this, that “it pleases God to govern us by their hand.” In so far they are God’s representatives.

a) Parents. Gen. 18 : 19.

b) Those in authority. Eph. 6 : 7.

c) Ministers. Luke 10 : 16.

d) Powers. Rom. 13 : 1, 1 Peter 2 : 13.

II. DUTIES OF SUPERIORS TOWARD THEIR INFERIORS.

“Since it pleases God to govern us by their hand,” implies not only for parents and all superiors the right to demand respect and obedience, but also the duty, as God’s representatives, to conduct themselves toward their children and subjects, and to “govern” them, according to the will of God. It is the duty of parents and of all in authority to care for the welfare of the bodies and the salvation of the souls of their children, and of those committed to them ; while ministers and teachers are chiefly to seek the salvation of the soul and the cultivation of the spirit, those in author-

ity the preservation of civil order. But all are in duty bound to give their subjects the example of an upright life.

1. Parents. 1 Tim. 5: 8, Prov. 13: 24, Eph. 6: 4.

2. Those in authority. Jer. 22: 13, Eph. 6: 9.

3. Ministers and teachers. Ezek. 3: 17-21, Acts 20: 28, 2 Tim. 4: 2, Tit. 2: 7, 1 Peter 5: 2, 3, Matt. 5: 19. It is an evil day when it may be said of a minister or of a teacher that to him applies the proverb: "Follow my words and not my works."

4. The government. Prov. 8: 16, Rom. 12: 8, Ps. 82: 3.

Examples. 1. Children, *a*) Pious: Jesus (Luke 2: 49, 51, John 19: 26, 27), Shem and Japhet (Gen. 9: 23), Joseph (Gen. 37: 2, 13, 14; 45: 9-11; 46: 29), Ruth (1: 16, 17).

b) Wicked: Ham (Gen. 9: 21, 22), Esau (Gen. 28: 6-9), Hophni and Phinehas (1 Sam. 2: 12), Absalom (2 Sam. 15: 6).

2. Parents, *a*) Faithful: The parents of Moses (Ex. 2: 1), of Samuel (1 Sam. 1: 20-28), of Jesus (Matt. 2: 13-15, Luke 2: 44-46, John 19: 25);

b) Unscrupulous: Eli (1 Sam. 3: 13).

3. Servants, *a*) Good: Eliezer (Gen. 24: 9, 12, 27, 56), Joseph (Gen. 39: 2, 5, 8, 9, 20-23).

b) Wicked: Gehazi (2 Kings 5: 19), the servants of Job (Job 19: 15, 16).

4. Rulers, *a*) Good: The centurion of Capernaum (Luke 7: 2);

b) Evil: Laban (Gen. 31: 38-41);

5. Members of the Church, *a*) Faithful: The Philippians (Phil. 4: 1, 10, 14);

b) Malicious: Alexander the coppersmith (2 Tim. 4: 14, 15).

6. Ministers and teachers, *a*) Faithful: Paul (Acts 20: 31, Eph. 3: 14, Phil. 1: 3-5);

b) False : False prophets (Jer. 14 : 14 ; 8 : 10, 11, Matt. 7 : 15, 16), heretics (Gal. 2 : 4, 5, 2 Peter 2 : 1-3, 1 John 4 : 1-3).

7. Subjects, a) Obedient : Christ (Matt. 22 : 15-21 ; 17 : 24-27), David (1 Sam. 24).

b) Seditious : The rebellion of Korah (Num. 16).

8. Governments, a) Good : Solomon (1 Kings 3 : 3-10), Hezekiah (2 Kings 18 : 3-7), Josiah (2 Chron. 34) ;

b) Wicked : Ahab (1 Kings 16-22), the Sanhedrim at Jerusalem (Matt. 26 : 59).

Question 105

What does God require in the sixth command ?

That neither in thoughts, nor words, nor gestures, much less in deeds, I dishonor, hate, wound, or kill my neighbor, by myself, or by another ; but that I lay aside all desire of revenge ; also that I hurt not myself, nor wilfully expose myself to any danger. Wherefore also the magistrate is armed with the sword to prevent murder.

Question 106.

But this command seems only to speak of murder.

In forbidding murder, God teaches us, that he abhors the causes thereof ; such as envy, hatred, anger, and desire of revenge ; and that he accounts all these as murder.

Question 107.

But is it enough that we do not kill any man in the manner mentioned above ?

No ; for when God forbids envy, hatred, and anger, he commands us to love our neighbor as ourselves ; to show patience, peace, meekness, mercy, and all kindness towards him, and prevent his hurt as much as in us lies ; and that we do good even unto our enemies.

The purpose of commandments 6—9 is the protection of our neighbor and of his property. The sixth commandment pertains to our neighbor's life, the seventh to his family, the eighth to his property, and the ninth to his honor.

I. What is Forbidden in the Sixth Commandment.

A. Murder is forbidden. To kill means to take a man's life. There is one kind of murder which destroys the body, and another which destroys the soul. The commandment refers chiefly to the former, to the slaying of the body. There is a distinction to be made between a coarser and a more refined form of murder. The former is accomplished by outward violence or direct means, and the latter by so undermining and injuring the health and life of our neighbor that his death follows as a result.

1. What is embraced in murder.

a) Reviling, *i. e.*, speaking evil of or against our neighbor. Ps. 15 : 1, 3.

b) Hatred, *i. e.*, cherishing evil thoughts in the heart against our neighbor. Lev. 19 : 17.

c) Insult, *i. e.*, slanderous expressions or acts intended to grieve or to hurt. Lev. 24 : 19.

d) Taking life, *i. e.*, the violent destruction of life. Lev. 24 : 17.

e) Revengefulness. Lev. 19 : 18.

f) Self-inflicted injury. Prov. 24 : 8. Injury is inflicted upon oneself, *e. g.*, by withholding from the body, through covetousness, whatever is needful to it, or by a lack of cleanliness and rest, Rom. 13 : 14; or by undermining one's health through intemperance in eating and drinking, or sensuality, 1 Cor. 3 : 17; or by mutilating one of the members of the body to escape military service. Suicide is especially forbidden. When this is caused by the clouding of the mind in delirium, or fever heat, a man is to be pitied. It may also be caused by despair over external circumstances or inward unrest; also by fear of punishment (as in the case of the jailer at Philippi, who would have killed himself, Acts 16 : 27). No man has power

over his own life. It belongs to God, who gave it. Examples of suicide are Saul, 1 Sam. 31 : 4, and Judas, Matt. 27 : 5.

g) Wanton or unnecessary exposure to danger or overtaxing one's strength. This is presumption. Matt. 4 : 7. In this is included duelling, which is indefensible on moral grounds : 1. Because it is inspired either by revenge or by a false sense of honor ; 2. Because thereby one exposes his life wantonly, *i. e.*, unnecessarily to danger ; and 3. Because the aim is to injure or even to destroy the life of the opponent, or at all events to bring it into danger. There is more moral courage required, if one is the offender, to ask for forgiveness ; and if one is the offended party, to forgive an enemy than to face a pistol. The meeting of David and Goliath cannot be quoted as an example, since it was an act of war and the two decided the conflict for their respective armies. When the Apostle Paul demanded as a matter of honor of the magistrates of the city of Philippi, who had punished him innocently and uncondemned, that they should themselves bring them forth out of the prison, he was not anxious about his personal honor, but that no reproach should be brought upon the gospel he was preaching in Greece, which he had just entered. Under other circumstances he was willing to bear all manner of contumely in his person. 2 Cor. 11 : 23-25.

2. How murder is committed.

a) In thought. Zech. 8 : 17.

b) In words, invective, words of abuse, and of railing and the like. Jer. 9 : 8, Matt. 5 : 22.

c) By angry, threatening, and mocking gestures, etc. Gen. 4 : 6, Ps. 22 : 7.

d) In act, as when a man himself takes the life of another violently or treacherously. Num. 35 : 16-21. Under the Mosaic law there was also a provision that

when any one killed another accidentally, unintentionally and without enmity, he could flee into one of the cities of refuge in the land, and after the death of the highpriest could return home unpunished; he was thus not punished by death, but only with banishment or imprisonment. Cain was a murderer. Gen. 4: 8.

He also is guilty of the act of murder who kills any one "by another when he incites and instigates or authorizes another to commit the act; as David had put to death Uriah (2 Sam. 12: 9), Ahab, Naboth (1 Kings 21), Herod, John (Matt. 14: 10).

Those become guilty of destroying the soul, who become to others a stumbling-block or give offence to them in words, gestures or deeds, by which they are led into sin or to a denial of their faith. Matt. 18: 6, 7.

B. The root of murder, *i. e.*, the thought out of which the deed springs is also forbidden.

1. Of such a nature are:

a) Envy, hatred, anger, which excite the heart to enmity against one's neighbor. Gal. 5: 19–21.

b) Revenge, *i. e.*, the desire to avenge upon another a real or supposed wrong which one has suffered, *i. e.*, to return evil for evil. The world says: "Revenge is sweet." It is indeed so for the flesh, but it has a bitter root, hatred, and bears a deadly fruit, enmity unto death. 1 Thess. 5: 15, Rom. 12: 19. Christian revenge is described in Rom. 12: 20, "Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head."

2. Such roots of evil must be eradicated from the heart:

a) Because from them finally springs murder, and whoever wishes to destroy a weed, must pull it up by the roots. Matt. 15: 19.

b) Because God hates these evil desires of the heart,

looks upon them as secret murder, and judges them the same as the deed itself. 1 Sam. 16 : 7, Matt. 5 : 22, 1 John 3 : 15.

3. Examples.

a) The brothers of Joseph were hostile to him and envied him, and when they saw him in the distance before he came near to them, they formed plans to kill him. Gen. 37 : 4, 11, 18. Envy was, therefore, the root of their murderous thoughts.

b) Absalom hated Amnon, and commanded his servants and said : Smite Amnon and slay him. And the servants of Absalom did so. 2 Sam. 13 : 22, 28, 29. Absalom's hatred was the root of the murder which he committed "by another."

c) The sons of Jacob became very wroth, and Simeon and Levi each took his sword and went into the city (Shechem) (as two against many) boldly and slew the males, in order to avenge the disgrace brought upon their sister Dinah. Gen. 34 : 7, 25. Anger and revenge were in this case the root of murder.

II. What is Allowed.

1. The State is allowed to execute the death penalty, but only when the sentence is just ; otherwise when it is inflicted in passion or unjustly, it is also murder. The magistrate bears the sword, *i. e.*, he is to prevent murder, in that he punishes the same with the death of the murderer, whereby he not only punishes him and renders him harmless, but also deters others from committing the same wicked act. The execution of the death penalty is not commanded under all circumstances. The pardon of the criminal is also allowed, and the death penalty may be entirely remitted or another punishment substituted for it. Rom. 13 : 4, Gen. 9 : 6, Matt. 26 : 52.

2. Self-defense. When in an attack or a surprise, by which our life is threatened, it is not possible for us

to obtain the protection of the State, we are allowed to act in self-defense. And if the assailant should thereby lose his life, it is not murder or homicide.

3. Lawful war, which is to be looked upon as the self-defense of a people when they are attacked or as the exercise of the power of the State to prevent injustice when occasion demands it. A war occasioned by ambition, greed of conquest, revenge and other passions is unjustifiable. Whether a war is lawful, is not to be decided by the individual subject or soldier, but by the government, which also carries the responsibility.

4. In this connection may also be considered the killing of animals, although the command has reference only to the taking of human life. Since the flood, God has allowed men to kill animals in self-protection and for food. Gen. 9 : 2, 3, Prov. 12 : 10. Children are to be warned against torturing insects, such as bugs, and flies, and robbing birds' nests. Many a murderer, who ended his life upon the gallows, has confessed that he commenced in his youth by being cruel to small animals, especially to young birds.

III. What is Commanded in the Sixth Commandment.

It is not enough that we do not kill our neighbor or otherwise injure him in any manner (Ques. 105 and 106), which God has forbidden, but He also commands us to act according to His will toward our neighbor. Such uprightness of conduct expresses itself (Ques. 107) in at least eight virtues. Every man is my neighbor without reference to his nationality or religion, and especially he who is in need of my help. Christ teaches this truth in the parable of the good Samaritan, Luke 10 : 29-37, when He changed the question : "Who is my neighbor?" to "To whom are you neighbor?" Acts 17 : 26, 2 Peter 1 : 7.

1. "To love our neighbor as ourselves." Love is a cordial attachment to another. Lev. 19 : 18. How we

are to understand the expression "as ourselves" Christ teaches us in the golden rule. Matt. 7 : 12.

2-6. "To show patience, peace, meekness, mercy, and all kindness," through which love expresses itself. Col. 3 : 12, 13.

a) Patience consists in this, that we endure the insults of our neighbor with unruffled temper. Its strength lies in self-control. Matt. 5 : 39.

b) By peace is here to be understood peaceableness, the disposition according to which one is willing to sacrifice a part of one's own right and advantage in order to live in unity with one's neighbor, and the endeavor to create and further peace among others. Rom. 12 : 18, Matt. 5 : 40 ; 5 : 9. Peaceableness is also manifested by approaching a neighbor, who has cause for complaint, to seek reconciliation with him. Matt. 5 : 23, 24, 25.

c) Meekness is to show itself in our efforts to convince our fellow-men of their wrong and to correct them, in that it is done not in bitterness, but with gentle words. Matt. 5 : 5, Gal. 6 : 1, 2.

d) Mercy consists in deep sympathy with our neighbor's bodily and mental distress and in active effort to help him out of his need. Luke 6 : 36, Matt. 5 : 7.

e) Kindness is sincere cordiality in word, gesture and act in our intercourse with our neighbor, and the readiness to serve him in all good things, without seeking anything for oneself in return. Matt. 5 : 47. Children should show kindness toward their companions, as well as to adults, by their readiness to serve them.

7. "To prevent his hurt as much as in us lies," *i. e.*, as much as is possible for us we should prevent any hurt from coming upon our neighbor, or relieve him of any that may have befallen him. Prov. 24 : 11, Isa. 58 : 7. In order to save the life of our neighbor, we

should risk even our own life, if necessity demands it. John 15: 13.

8. "That we do good even unto our enemies." An enemy is one who wishes me ill, or from an evil purpose does me harm. Love of an enemy is shown not merely in refraining from returning evil for evil, but also in recompensing his evil for good. Ex. 23: 4, 5, Matt. 5: 44, 45, Rom. 12: 20.

The suffering Savior (Luke 22: 49-51; 23: 24) and dying Stephen (Acts 7: 59) are examples of love of enemies.

Question 108.

What doth the seventh command teach us?

That all uncleanness is accursed of God, and that therefore we must, with all our hearts, de'est the same, and live chastely and temperately, whether in holy wedlock or in single life.

Question 109.

Doth God forbid, in this command, only adultery, and such like gross sins?

Since both our body and soul are temples of the Holy Ghost, he commands us to preserve them pure and holy; therefore he forbids all unchaste actions, gestures, words, thoughts, desires, and whatever can entice men thereto.

In treating this commandment before children, the greatest care needs to be exercised, as the sphere of marital life is known to them only as it manifests itself in the family, and since it behooves us to warn children against sins which for the most part are yet unknown to them. But the subject must not be evaded, especially since in our time sins of the flesh are so appallingly common, and our youth, through increasing effeminacy, are brought more and more under the fascination of secret sins. One should speak of it with earnestness and reserve, but yet in plainness and candor. With my catechumens I have sought to reach

this end in an interview, which, as pastor, I was in the habit of holding with each one privately in my study before confirmation.

I. Of Holy Matrimony.

1. Holy matrimony is a union as to body and soul for life between one man and one woman, ordained by God Himself and sanctified in Christ. Gen. 1 : 27, 28, Matt. 19 : 4-6, Gen. 2 : 24. Polygamy belongs to the abominations of the heathen, and, as found under the old covenant, is to be judged in the light of God's forbearance.

By His presence at the marriage of Cana, Christ gave His sanction to holy matrimony, and by His first miracle pledged His blessing upon it. John 2 : 1-11.

2. In entering into a conjugal union one is not to proceed thoughtlessly, and outward circumstances, such as money or physical beauty and so on, are not to be the basis of decision. It must be a matter of the heart and be consummated with parental approval. Prov. 31 : 10, 30.

The proverb says : "Marriages are made in heaven." This holds true only when honor and piety control both parties, and when the will of God is inquired after. Example : Isaac and Rebecca, Gen. 24 : 3-4, 12-14.

3. The civil ceremony precedes the religious. The latter only constitutes true marriage, since in it alone the marriage covenant is sealed in the name of God, and the betrothed are united in marriage, *i. e.*, they pledge marital fidelity to each other before God. "Trauen" (to unite in marriage) is derived from "Treue" (fidelity), and matrimony is spoken of beautifully among the people as pledged troth, *i. e.*, as the firmest and most inviolable pledge. The religious ceremony is not to be neglected, because by it matrimony is sanctified, and it is only then that we can

speak of it as "holy matrimony." Those who are engaged are not to regard themselves, as is often the case, as man and wife before they are joined in marriage. Otherwise they sin grievously.

4. The basis of the right relation in holy matrimony is: "to show to one another love, honor and fidelity." Eph. 5: 28, 33, 1 Peter 3: 7.

The husband is the head of the family, also of the wife. Eph. 5: 22, 23.

The wife is the helpmeet of the husband in labor, in joy and in sorrow, but not his slave. Gen. 2: 18. Their relation to God in Christ and to salvation is expressed in Gal. 3: 28, *i. e.*, there is no difference between them, for they are all one in Christ Jesus. Since the loss of Paradise through sin, it may be said in many respects, "Ehestand—Wehestand" (state of matrimony—state of woe). Gen. 3: 16–19. Under all circumstances the counsel of the apostle (Gal. 6: 2) is to be observed, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." Matrimony is also a state of joy, especially when God blesses it with a family of healthy and well-favored children. Ps. 128: 2–6.

5. Mixed marriages, *i. e.*, marriages between Protestants and Catholics, are to be avoided, as inward and marital peace are too much endangered when both hold firmly to their Churches. Marriages between Christians and Jews or heathen are entirely indefensible, as in these cases there is not only a difference in confessions, but also in religion. A believing Christian should also guard against forming a matrimonial alliance with an unbeliever, since his religious life would be easily affected thereby.

6. The marriage bond is indissoluble, and divorce is under no circumstances to be granted, except when marital infidelity of the one or of the other has been proved; further also in cases of willful desertion.

These are the only admissible grounds of divorce, according to the old Reformed marriage regulation (Calvin). All others are without support in God's Word and Spirit. Matt. 19: 9, 1 Cor. 7: 10, 15.

II. What God has Forbidden in the Seventh Commandment.

All uncleanness in holy wedlock or in single life.

1. Outward.

a) "Unchaste actions." Gal. 5: 19.

Adultery is committed by a husband when he stands in unlawful relations with another woman; by a wife, when she stands in such relations with another man. Examples: For our warning, Herod, to whom John the Baptist said: "It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife" (Mark 6: 17, 18); for our imitation, Joseph, when Potiphar's wife wished to betray him, who said: "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" Gen. 39: 9.

Such unlawful relations among those in single life are called unchastity. The holy scriptures characterize bodily impurity, the so-called secret sins, which cry to heaven, onanism and sodomy, as the most abominable of all sins. Gen. 18: 20, 21, Rom. 1: 26, 27.

b) "Unchaste gestures and words." Eph. 4: 29; 5: 3, 4.

With unchaste gestures must also be classed all kinds of indecent exposure of the body. Décolleté dress among women also does not accord with a Christian sense of modesty.

2. Inward.

a) "Unchaste thoughts and desires." The source of all impurity is the fleshly lust of the heart. Matt. 15: 19; 5: 28, James 1: 15.

b) "Whatever can entice thereto." In this is included first of all intemperance in eating and drinking (compare, Lot, Gen. 19: 33) and idleness (David, 2 Sam.

11 : 2), Rom. 13 : 13, 14, Prov. 23 : 31-33, Eph. 5 : 18. These well-known sayings are true : "Idleness is the beginning of all evil ;" or "Idleness is the devil's couch." Then evil companions and their loose speech. 1 Cor. 15 : 33. Further, unchaste or tempting songs, books (romances) and pictures. Lastly, the theatre and all sorts of amusements, *e. g.*, drinking-bouts and frivolous dances, whereby the sensual desires are excited. Matt. 14 : 6.

III. What God has Commanded in the Seventh Commandment.

Chastity in holy wedlock and in single life.

1. Aversion to and hatred of all unchastity, both outward and inward, "that we must, with all our hearts, detest the same." Jude, v. 23, 2 Tim. 2 : 22.

2. The preservation of a chaste mind and heart. 1 Peter 2 : 11, Phil. 4 : 8.

3. The observance of modesty and chastity in life. Heb. 13 : 4, Gal. 5 : 16.

IV. Why Unchastity is to be Detested.

1. Unchastity in itself dishonors, and in its effects injures both body and soul.

2. Unchastity is accursed of God. Heb. 13 : 4.

3. The body and soul of the Christian are a temple of the Holy Ghost. 1 Cor. 6 : 18, 20.

4. Marriage is a symbol of the holy communion between Christ and the Church. Eph. 5 : 22-32.

V. What Helps in Preserving Chastity.

1. Prayer and a chaste heart. Ps. 51 : 10.

2. The avoidance of all that would excite impurity (compare II., 2, b).

3. Watchfulness over oneself. Prov. 4 : 23, Job 31 : 1.

4. Constant thought of the nearness of God, who looks into the heart and sees what is hidden. Ps. 139 : 1-4.

Question 110.

What doth God forbid in the eighth command?

God forbids not only those thefts and robberies which are punishable by the magistrate, but he comprehends under the name of theft, all wicked tricks and devices, whereby we design to appropriate to ourselves the goods which belong to our neighbor: whether it be by force, or under the appearance of RIGHT, as by unjust weights, ells, measures, FRAUDULENT merchandise, false coins usury, or by any other way forbidden by God; as also all covetousness, all waste and abuse of his gifts.

Question 111.

But what doth God require in this command?

That I promote the advantage of my neighbor in every instance I can or may, and deal with him as I desire to be dealt with by others; further also, that I faithfully labor, so that I may be able to relieve the needy.

I. God Forbids Us to Encroach in Any Way on our Neighbor's Property.

1. To steal means to appropriate unlawfully another's property, or in any way whatever to bring into our possession what belongs to our neighbor. Hab. 2: 6. Property that belongs to another may be lawfully acquired by sale, exchange or gift, etc.

2. Many persons would justify their dishonesty by excuses that are inadequate, claiming that the one whom they rob has an abundance or more than he needs; that what they take is small in quantity or of insignificant value; that necessity has driven them to it, and that necessity knows no law. Children do not regard it as a serious wrong to take money or other things belonging to their parents. The sin does not depend on whether the person robbed has much, nor on the quantity stolen, but it depends upon the deed itself. It is stealing in every case. Poverty and necessity do not license stealing. The way of deliverance for such is indicated by God Himself. Ps. 91:

15, "He shall call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him." To children God says, Prov. 28: 24, "Whoso robbeth his father or his mother, and saith, It is no transgression; the same is the companion of a destroyer" (in league with robbers).

3. Stealing is a grave sin, because it is an infringement of the order of God, who has allotted to each one his portion, and by this commandment He has sanctified property. Prov. 30: 9, 1 Cor. 6: 10, "Nor thieves, . . . nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God." Achan (Josh. 7) and Judas (John 12: 6) were thieves.

4. A distinction is to be made between coarser and more refined theft.

(A) 5. To the coarser form of theft belong:

a) The secret appropriation of another's property, such as stealing from churches, houses, orchards, fields or woods.

b) Robbery, the taking away of another's property by force or by threatening the safety and life of the owner. Highway robbery. Lev. 19: 13.

(B) 6. Under the head of refined theft fall "all wicked tricks and devices, whereby we design to appropriate to ourselves the goods which belong to our neighbor, whether it be by force, or under the appearance of right." To this class belong cunning and deception of every sort in conduct and in trade, by which men take advantage of their fellows and injure their property. In these days the state punishes not only "thefts and robberies," but also every form of fraud. A deceitful transaction has the appearance of being right, *i. e.*, outwardly it appears as if everything were right and proper, and yet it is not honest. Amos 8: 4-7.

7. By way of example the following wicked tricks may be cited as frauds:

a) “Unjust weights, ells, measures.” Lev. 19 : 35, Prov. 11 : 1.

b) The sale of bad merchandize, and the adulteration of food for profit. To this category belongs inferior workmanship. 1 Thess. 4 : 6.

c) Counterfeit coin and usury. Not only to make, but also to circulate counterfeit money when one is aware of it, is fraud. Usury in the sense of interest on money lent is not forbidden in itself (see Christ’s teaching in the parable, Matt. 25 : 27, Luke 19 : 23), but certainly in the sense of excessive interest, or when the need of one’s neighbor is taken advantage of, and when interest is taken from the poor. Lev. 25 : 35, 36.

d) “Any other way forbidden by God,” even if it is not directly condemned in the Word of God, but yet is contrary to its spirit. To this category belong :

1. Receiving stolen goods. “To conceal is as bad as to steal” (proverb).

This sin is committed *a)* when one knows of a theft and fails to give information of it ; *b)* when one conceals what has been stolen ; *c)* when one accepts as a gift or purchases what he knows to have been stolen. Prov. 29 : 24.

2. Changing boundaries, either by secretly removing landmarks or effacing such lines. Deut. 27 : 17.

3. Embezzlement by purloining or permitting to go to ruin that which has been entrusted to one’s charge (*e. g.*, by servants and workmen). Lev. 6 : 2.

4. To borrow and not to pay back, as well as all forms of reckless contracting of debts. Ps. 37 : 21.

5. Keeping back or curtailing wages that have been earned. Lev. 19 : 13, Jer. 22 : 13, James 5 : 4.

6. Not to give back to a known owner anything that has been found. Lev. 6 : 2, 3.

7. Gambling (cards, dice, lotteries, etc.). 2 Thess. 3 : 11, 12.

8. Unjust lawsuits. Jer. 5 : 28, James 2 : 6. Example : Ahab against Naboth. 1 Kings 21.

(C) 9. The unlawful use of one's own property is likewise theft. All property is an individual trust from God, for whose use an account must be rendered. 1 Cor. 4 : 7, Luke 16 : 2.

Both covetousness and extravagance are sinful.

a) Covetousness is the inordinate desire for possessions and retaining them without making use of them for the benefit of oneself or others. Luke 12 : 15, 1 Tim. 6 : 10.

Covetousness is : 1. Theft, because we do not honor God with our possessions, but on the contrary we appropriate them to ourselves and alienate them from God. Prov. 3 : 9. 2. Idolatry, because we withhold from our own families and from those in need what we owe them ; yea, the covetous man robs himself, in that he begrudges himself everything. The avaricious person also readily resorts to unlawful means to enrich himself or to increase his goods. Col. 3 : 9, 1 Tim. 6 : 9.

b) Unnecessary extravagance consists in excessive expenditure for eating and drinking, clothing, pleasures, etc., as well as in expenditures for things which we do not need. Beside this wastefulness in money and possessions there is a wastefulness of time. Such a squanderer of time is called a "sluggard." Prov. 23 : 20-21 ; 6 : 6-11. Example : The prodigal son. Luke 15 : 13, 14.

Waste of time and money is theft : for time is stolen from God, who has given the command, "Six days shalt thou labor ;" and the man's family is deprived of the money wasted, and he brings himself and them, as well as his needy fellow-men, into distress and want. 1 Tim. 5 : 8.

Not every expenditure is "useless extravagance ;" but men of wealth and rank, as well as kings and prin-

ces, have the right to spend more for their table, for clothing, upon their houses, etc., than a poor man, or one of lower rank. At the same time one is not to live beyond his means. Such expenditure is again to the advantage of trade and labor by which other people live. But such a mode of life also becomes sinful when one's affections are set upon it, or when thereby one's duties to his fellow-men are neglected, and very little is left for the kingdom of God. Hag. 1 : 2-4. The rich man, Luke 16 : 19-21.

II. God Commands Us to be Concerned for our Neighbor's Welfare.

(A) 1. Our relation to our neighbor in general. "That I promote the advantage (*i. e.*, welfare and prosperity) of my neighbor in every instance I can or may" (*i. e.*, where I myself am in a position to do it and as far as my circumstances allow it). Phil. 2 : 4, 1 Pet. 4 : 10.

2. When our neighbor has been injured by robbery of any kind, the thief, when he comes to the knowledge of his sin, must restore what he has taken or make compensation for the injury he has done. Ex. 22 : 3, Ezek. 33 : 15.

When one is afraid or ashamed to approach the injured party himself, the intervention of the pastor or of some other trustworthy member of the congregation may be sought. If the injured party is dead, compensation should be made to the heirs or to the poor. Example : Zaccheus, Luke 19 : 8.

3. The golden rule is particularly applicable to my relation to my neighbor's possessions, viz., "that I do to him as I would that he should do to me." Matt. 7 : 12.

(B) 4. To provide for our fellow-men who are in want is particularly commanded. Isa. 58 : 7, Eph. 4 : 28.

The support of the needy, almsgiving, may be practiced in many ways, but in all cases heartily and cheerfully. 2 Cor. 9 : 7. It is not to be done for personal aggrandizement (as did the Pharisees, Matt. 6 : 1, 2), but secretly, Matt. 6 : 3, 4.

(C) 5. In sharp contrast with robbery, labor is set forth as the lawful God-ordained means of acquiring maintenance, and increasing one's possessions, especially labor in a proper vocation. "That I faithfully labor." This embraces three parts :

a) Industry. Gen. 3 : 19, 1 Thess. 4 : 11. Examples : Jacob, Gen. 31 : 38-41 ; Paul, Acts 20 : 34, 35.

b) Economy. Prov. 13 : 11. The Lord also said unto His disciples, John 6 : 12, "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost."

Economy is essentially distinguished from covetousness in this, that it proceeds from a feeling of duty not to allow any one of God's gifts to perish, while covetousness proceeds from avarice and has its eye fixed solely upon increased possessions.

c) Contentment. 1 Tim. 6 : 6-8, Heb. 13 : 5. Labor faithfully, live within your means, and as for the rest remember what the Lord hath said : "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

6. In conclusion : From covetousness and envy arises the transgression, from self-denial and love of one's neighbors the fulfillment of the eighth commandment.

Question 112.

What is required in the ninth command ?

That I bear false witness against no man, nor falsify any man's words ; that I be no backbiter, or slanderer ; that I do not judge, or join in condemning any man rashly or unheard ; but that I avoid all sorts of lies and deceit, as the proper works of the devil, unless I would bring down upon me the heavy wrath of God ; likewise, that in judgment and all other dealings I love the truth, speak it uprightly, and confess it ; also, that I defend and promote as much as I am able the honour and good character of my neighbour.

I. Sins Forbidden by God.

1. The ninth commandment treats of our conduct in relation to our neighbor's honor and reputation in daily intercourse.

2. Everything is forbidden that might injure our neighbor's honor and reputation.

a) False witness. Testimony is a statement concerning any man or thing, whether attested by an oath or not. One is guilty of bearing false witness, not merely when one himself invents and makes a false statement, but also when one receives and spreads such a statement from others. Ex. 23 : 1, Prov. 19 : 5. Example : The witnesses against Naboth, 1 Kings 21.

b) Slander, *i. e.*, to injure a man's reputation by making a false statement based upon a misrepresentation of his language. His language is misrepresented (perverted) either by omission or addition, or false construction. Lev. 19 : 16, Prov. 4 : 24, Ps. 15 : 3. Example : The false witnesses against Christ, Matt. 26 : 61. Compare John 2 : 19, 21. Jesus had said : "Destroy this temple"—His body. But they declared that He said, I can destroy the temple of God at Jerusalem.

c) Calumny, to which also belongs all meddling and tale-bearing, by which people are set against each other. James 4 : 11.

d) Defamation, *i. e.*, to attribute to our neighbor crimes which bring him into disrepute. Jer. 18 : 18, Eph. 4 : 31, Tit. 3 : 1, 2.

e) To condemn without a hearing, or to judge thoughtlessly. John 7 : 51, Luke 6 : 37, 41.

f) Lying, *i. e.*, to state an untruth knowingly or intentionally. Lev. 19 : 11. Example : Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5. It is an inexcusable evasion to say that a lie is allowable which does not injure another or which may even be to his advantage. The following also are sinful :

1. A lie spoken in jest; we are not to play with sin, with a lie. Eph. 5 : 4.

2. Lies of necessity. For the Christian no necessity can arise which justifies sin, a lie. Rom. 3 : 8. Compare the "lies of necessity" of Abraham and Isaac, spoken in weakness of faith, Gen. 12 : 10-19 ; 26 : 6-11 ; of Peter, Matt. 26 : 69-73. While the Lord in a really trying exigency, v. 63-66, was confessing the truth, Peter from fear of man and imaginary necessity was lying. Bitter sorrow (v. 75) followed the "lie of necessity."

g) Deceitfulness, *i. e.*, all forms of deception in speech.

1. Hypocrisy and flattery. Ps. 12 : 2 ; 55 : 21.

2. Deceit. Prov. 12 : 22.

3. "Business lies," which are employed to dupe one's neighbor by a false representation concerning goods offered him.

4. "Lies of courtesy," so-called compliments, employed to say agreeable things at the expense of the truth. Flippancy of speech, gossip and boastfulness lead to lying and deception. Sins of the tongue are of all sins the most common. Prov. 10 : 19. To boast of one's sins is outrageous. Isa. 3 : 9, Jas. 3 : 5.

3. Why lying and deception are to be avoided.

a) Because they are the devil's own works, *i. e.*, they really originate from him. Truth is divine, lying is devilish. John 8 : 44.

b) Because God's wrath, *i. e.*, His judgment is threatened against these. Ps. 5 : 6.

II. The Virtues Which God Enjoins.

1. Love of truth. If the lips are to speak the truth, the heart must first be inclined thereto.

2. Speaking the truth in sincerity. One is not bound in all cases (except before a magistrate) to tell

all that he knows or all that is true, whether inquiry is made in relation thereto or not; for there is also a virtue in secrecy with reference to what has been entrusted to us. When one is solicited to speak freely, the answers must be openly evasive, and one must not seek to help himself by the use of ambiguous language. While, therefore, we are not obliged to tell all that is true, what we do say must be true. Prov. 12: 17, Eph. 4: 25. Examples: Nathan, 2 Sam. 12 (concerning David); John the Baptist, John 1: 19 (concerning himself).

3. Perseverance in the confession of the truth, even when it involves danger to body and life. 2 Cor. 1: 17. Example: Peter and John before the Sanhedrim, Acts 4.

4. To establish and to maintain the honor and the good name of our neighbor. Honor and a good name are precious possessions, which we are to preserve not only for ourselves, but also for our neighbor. From this, however, it is not inferred that we are to defend or palliate manifest wrong done by our neighbor. Isa. 5: 20. We are to preserve the good name of our neighbor. 1 Sam. 19: 4. We are to promote our neighbor's honor. 1 Sam. 16: 18.

5. The means by which the sins forbidden may be avoided, and the virtues enjoined, practiced.

a) Watchfulness, Ps. 39: 1.

b) Prayer, Ps. 141: 3.

Question 113.

What doth the tenth command require of us?

That even the smallest inclination, or thought, contrary to any of God's commands, never rise in our hearts; but that at all times we hate all sins with our whole hearts, and delight in all righteousness.

The tenth commandment relates chiefly to the unlawful desire for our neighbor's property, and is a part of

the second table of the law, but as the concluding commandment it also has reference to all of them. In this latter sense Paul uses it, Rom. 7 : 7, "For I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." So also Christ in the sermon on the mount (Matt. 5) in the words "but I say unto you" extends the tenth commandment to the whole law; even as in Matt. 15 : 19-20, He traces back the origin of all sins against the second table to the evil inclination which is forbidden in the tenth commandment.

I. The Desire for Evil is Forbidden.

1. Evil inclination is the incitation and desire for anything evil in the heart.

2. Although the evil inclination often arises involuntarily in the heart, yet in its origin even the smallest inclination is sin, because it proceeds from a sinful heart. James 1 : 14.

3. The second stage is, that one takes pleasure in the evil desire and yields to it in thought. James 1 : 15, Matt. 15 : 19, 20.

4. The command not only forbids the evil desire, but also enjoins upon us not to allow ourselves to be enticed by evil. A man cannot stop birds from flying about him, but he can prevent them from building nests upon his head. Gen. 4 : 7.

5. As the evil desire is incited from without, everything that brings one into danger is to be avoided. 1 John 2 : 15, 16. 1 John 5 : 19, "The whole world lieth in wickedness." On this account all inclination to evil, as well as all sin, has its ultimate origin in the evil one, *i. e.*, the devil.

II. The Desire for Good is Enjoined.

1. "Hate all sin." We must not only condemn sinful deeds, but must also hate the sin within us and struggle against it. This is done through self-denial.

To deny oneself means not to do anything to please oneself and one's own flesh, but in all acts and deeds to have regard only for God; or to act as if one did not know himself and as if his own flesh did not belong to him, *i. e.*, to recognize and subdue his flesh as an enemy, which must be overcome in the conflict. Ps. 119 : 104, Gal. 5 : 24.

2. "Delight in all righteousness" (*i. e.*, delight in all that is just and that is enjoined by God). Rom. 7 : 22, Matt. 5 : 48.

3. To this end the continued renewal of the heart and the sanctification of the life is necessary. Eph. 4 : 22, 23, Gal. 5 : 16.

4. "At all times with our whole heart." We can neither love the good without hating the evil, nor hate the evil without loving the good. Jer. 4 : 3, Matt. 6 : 24.

Question 114.

But can those who are converted to God, perfectly keep these commands?

No; but even the holiest men, while in this life, have only small beginnings of this obedience, yet so, that with a sincere resolution, they begin to live, not only according to some, but all the commands of God.

1. The natural man may indeed strive outwardly after a life that is honorable according to human conceptions of morality, but the commandments of God he cannot keep, because he lacks the impetus and power of the Spirit of God. The converted or regenerated man is able to keep God's commandments, because he has the Spirit of God, but he cannot do this perfectly, because here he has still to struggle with the flesh, which lusts against the Spirit. Gal. 5 : 17, 1 John 1 : 8, James 3 : 2.

2. The converted man's obedience of the commandments of God can be spoken of as "only small begin-

nings" in comparison with the perfection required by the law of God, or in comparison with legal perfection. James 2 : 10.

Even "the holiest men," *i. e.*, the children of God who by grace have reached the highest degree of obedience, themselves confess that they have only attained a slight beginning. Job, Job 9 : 2, 3 ; David, Ps. 19 : 12 ; Paul, Rom. 7 : 18, 19, Phil. 3 : 12.

3. This, however, must not deter us from following after holiness, *i. e.*, growth in the inner life, for there is such a thing as an evangelical perfection possible in this life (*i. e.*, a perfection offered by the gospel in contrast with that of the law) ; "yet so," which consists in this, that "with a sincere resolution we begin to live, not only according to some, but all the commands of God," according to the workings of the Holy Ghost, who dwells in us. Ps. 119 : 106, Rom. 7 : 22.

Regenerated persons, when they have lapsed into sin, recover again from their fall by the power of God's grace in virtue of their forgiveness through the blood of Christ. Phil. 3 : 13.

4. That in this life we are able to make only a small beginning in perfect obedience, indicates to us also that our sanctification does not rest upon good works, but only upon justification through grace. This also is our comfort in all the weakness and imperfection of our inward life and of our conduct. 1 John 2 : 1, 2.

Question 115.

Why will God then have the ten commands so strictly preached, since no man in this life can keep them ?

First, that all our lifetime, we may learn more and more to know our sinful nature, and thus become the more earnest in seeking the remission of sin, and righteousness in Christ ; likewise, that we constantly endeavour and pray to God for the grace of the Holy Spirit, that we may become more and more conformable to the image of God, until we arrive at the perfection proposed to us, in a life to come.

1. The law is also of service to the converted.

a) It serves as a mirror to bring them to a knowledge of their sins, and that all their lifetime. This knowledge is also progressive, for at first it takes cognizance of grosser sins, and then "more and more" of the more refined sins, in that through the influence of the Holy Ghost the spiritual eye becomes more and more discerning. Rom. 3: 20; 5: 13.

b) Through our increasing knowledge of sin we "become the more earnest in seeking the remission of sin and righteousness in Christ." Matt. 5: 6, Rom. 10: 4.

Calvin says with reference to the above passage: "The Apostle shows that he (as the Jews, v. 3) is a false interpreter of the law who strives to become righteous through its works, since the law is given for the purpose of leading us to another righteousness; yea, all that the law teaches, all its demands and promises have Christ as their end, on account of which all its parts are to be referred to Him. But this can take place only when we lay aside all self-righteousness, are permeated by the knowledge of sin, and supplicate Him only for righteousness by grace. Matt. 5: 17, 'Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.' Therefore Rom. 10: 4 cannot be interpreted as implying that Christ abolished the law of God. He fulfilled it in His perfect obedience and atoned for our transgressions of it by His sufferings and death, and, thereby, has secured for us who believe on Him the righteousness which avails before God."

2. The preaching of the law admonishes us to live earnest lives before God.

a) We should constantly endeavor that we may become more and more conformable to the image of God. Deut. 31: 11-13, 2 Cor. 7: 1.

b) At the same time, because the regenerate cannot do this through their own strength, we are to “pray to God for the grace of the Holy Spirit,” who gives us power. Eph. 3 : 16, Ps. 143 : 10.

3. “Until we arrive at the perfection proposed to us, in a life to come.” The goal of perfection is attained only with the renewal of the body in the resurrection, when the whole man is again fully restored to the image of God. 1 Cor. 13 : 9, 10, 1 John 3 : 2. The elect of God have, therefore,

a) A heartfelt desire for the goal of perfection. Rom. 8 : 23, 24.

b) An unshaken certainty that they will reach this goal. 2 Tim. 1 : 12.

The law of God serves a threefold purpose for those who have been regenerated :

1. It furthers them in the knowledge of sin.
2. It serves as a rule of life for them.
3. It keeps alive in them the desire for perfection.

OF PRAYER.

Question 116.

Why is prayer necessary for Christians?

Because it is that chief part of thankfulness which God requires of us ; and also, *because* God will give his peace and Holy Spirit to those only, who with sincere desires continually ask them of him, and are thankful for them.

I. The Nature and Character of Prayer.

A. The nature of prayer. Prayer is not merely meditating upon God, but is the intercourse of the heart (the believing soul) with God. Ps. 19 : 14 ; 5 : 2.

Prayer is the native breath of the renewed man. The first indication of life in the case of Paul after he was converted was that he prayed. Acts 9 : 11.

Prayer is the thermometer of the inner life, by which the Christian may himself gauge his communion with the living God. James 5 : 16.

1. When are we to pray ?

a) From of old the children of God observed three stated times for prayer : morning, noon and night. Ps. 63 : 6, Deut. 8 : 10. Prayer was offered by Christ at the table in the circle of His disciples. Matt. 14 : 19, Mark 14 : 22, Luke 24 : 30, 35. Isaac at eventide went into the field to pray. Gen. 24 : 63. Daniel prayed three times a day. Daniel 6 : 10. Peter and John observed the customary hours of prayer for the children of Israel. Acts 3 : 1.

b) Other times are suitable for prayer, even as often as we have desires to bring unto God. Ps. 62 : 8, Eph. 6 : 18.

c) Pray without ceasing. 1 Thess. 5 : 17. This does not mean that we are to pray without intermission, but that we are not to omit praying. 1 Peter 3 : 7, Rom. 12 : 12. See the parable of the unjust judge. Luke 18 : 1.

2. Where shall we pray ?

a) Alone, in secret. Matt. 6 : 6. Whoever does not have a place to which he can retire by himself in the house, let him follow the example of Isaac (Gen. 24 : 63), or of Jesus (Matt. 14 : 23), and seek one outdoors.

b) In the public service of the congregation. In the service of song we pray aloud. The prayer offered by the minister we follow silently in the heart. Ps. 111 : 1, Acts 1 : 14.

c) In home worship, with the family, with the household.

3. How are we to pray ?

a) Aloud or silently ? No directions with reference to this are given. It depends upon circumstances and regulates itself. Luke 6 : 45, “. . . for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.” Han-

nah, on the contrary, 1 Sam. 1 : 13, "spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard." Moses is not heard to pray, Ex. 14; he sighed only in his heart, and yet the Lord said (v. 15), "Wherefore criest thou unto me?" The catechism speaks of asking "with sincere desires continually."

b) In what posture? Upon this the efficacy and the hearing of the prayer do not depend. But it has its significance. The children of Israel prayed standing or kneeling with outstretched arms; on fast-days they fell upon the face to the earth. 1 Kings 8 : 54, Daniel 6 : 10. According to Luke 18 : 11, 13, both the Pharisee and publican stood at prayer. Num. 16 : 22. Christians pray sitting, standing or kneeling; with bowed heads and folded hands, the former as an expression of humiliation before God, and the latter as that of inward composure.

Examples of kneeling in prayer: The Lord Jesus Himself, Luke 22 : 41; Stephen, Acts 7 : 60; Peter, Acts 9 : 40; Paul, Acts 20 : 36, Eph. 3 : 14; the early Christians, Acts 21 : 5; the saints in heaven, Rev. 4 : 10; 11 : 16.

In accordance with the custom of the early Church, the Reformed at first knelt in prayer at public service, following the example of Zurich and Geneva. The Directory of Worship of the Reformed Church of France (*la discipline des églises réformées de France*) directs in chapter 10, Art. 1, that in public, as well as in family worship, the head be uncovered and the knee be bent in prayer. "The pastors, as well as the elders and the heads of families, are instructed to have great care that during prayer everyone without exception and without respect of person give evidence of these outward signs of the humility of his heart and his reverence before God; except when by sickness or other causes, the judgment of which must be left to his own conscience, he be prevented from so doing."

At the religious conference of Poissy (1561) there appeared before King Charles IX. and his mother, Queen Catharine, as the representative of the Reformed Church, Theodore of Beza, the friend and successor of Calvin, besides thirty-three pastors and elders. When at the beginning of the proceedings he was called upon to speak, he stepped before the bar, and with a clear, firm voice said: "Since the issue of every undertaking depends upon God's grace and help, it will not displease your Majesty, nor will you find it strange, if we open the services by calling upon His name." He then kneeled with his Reformed brethren, while the Catholic prelates stood and offered the prayer with which every divine service in Geneva was opened. (It was the prayer of Oecolampadius, entitled "public confession," and is found also in the Electoral Palatinate Directory of Worship: "Heavenly Father, eternal and merciful God! we acknowledge and confess before thy divine Majesty that we are poor, miserable sinners," etc.) Then they arose, and Beza delivered his address in defence of the Reformed doctrine.

4. The entire life of the Christian is to be a prayer, in that he is to strive earnestly that he may at all times be found in the proper frame of mind for prayer. Zech. 12: 10.

"A time and place in which to pray
In solitude I sought alway;
Now in my heart unceasingly
I pray, alone where'er I be."

— *G. Tersteegen.*

B. Different kinds of prayer mentioned by the Apostle, 1 Tim. 2: 1, are: Supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks. Regardless of special occasions for the one or the other, these four parts are found united in every prayer as the four spices in the sacrifice of incense under the old covenant. Ex. 30: 34.

1. Supplications for the forgiveness of sins, for help and deliverance and for God's gifts. Ps. 20: 5, John 16: 24.

2. Prayers, in the special sense of praise, adoration. Ps. 147: 1; 95: 6.

3. Intercessions, supplications for others. Col. 1: 3; 4: 3, James 5: 16, Matt. 5: 44. Abraham prayed for Sodom, Gen. 18; Moses for his people, Ex. 32: 11, Num. 14: 13; the centurion of Capernaum for his sick servant, Matt. 8: 5; Jesus prayed for Peter, Luke 22: 32, for His disciples and for all believers, John 17: 20, for His enemies, Luke 23: 34.

4. Giving of thanks for benefits received and deliverances experienced. Col. 1: 12, Ps. 107.

II. The Necessity of Prayer.

Prayer is necessary for us:

1. Because God requires it of us as the chief part of thankfulness.

a) God requires prayer of us. Ps. 50: 15; 27: 8. Although God knows what we need and His purpose in relation to our salvation stands firm, yet He desires us to come before Him in prayer and supplication, in order that we may praise Him, and that our faith may be strengthened. Matt. 6: 32, ". . . your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things;" and yet, Matt. 7: 7, "Ask and it shall be given you." Luke 18: 7.

b) Prayer is the "chief part of thankfulness," 1) because it is the most direct expression of our gratitude; 2) because adoration is the highest honor we can pay to God; 3) because it is necessary for us as an expression of the thanks we would bring to God in our good works. Ps. 50: 14.

2. Because we are in need of prayer. For "God will give his grace and Holy Spirit to those only,

a) "who with sincere desires continually ask them of him." Deut. 4: 29. Luke 11: 13, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" This does not refer to the effect of grace and of the Holy Ghost in conversion; for the Holy Ghost Himself is necessary to prayer. Rom. 8: 26. When thankfulness in prayer is spoken of, the reference is to the children of God, asking for the increase of His gifts of grace and of the Spirit.

b) "Who are thankful for them." Ps. 50: 23.

Example: The Samaritan who returned to give thanks, Luke 17: 11-19; while the nine had merely received the healing of the body, the one who returned to give thanks experienced in addition a strengthening of his faith.

Question 117.

What are the requisites of that prayer, which is acceptable to God, and which he will hear?

First, that we from the heart pray to the one true God only, who hath manifested himself in his word, for all things he hath commanded us to ask of him: secondly, that we rightly and thoroughly know our need and misery, that so we may deeply humble ourselves in the presence of his divine majesty; thirdly, that we be fully persuaded that he, notwithstanding we are unworthy of it, will, for the sake of Christ our Lord, certainly hear our prayer, as he has promised us in his word.

Not every prayer is acceptable to God and will be heard by Him. Isa. 1: 15, James 4: 3. Example: The prayer of the Pharisee in the temple. Luke 18: 11, 14.

Therefore, if our prayer is to be heard of God, it must be of the right sort. We are to consider, 1) to whom, 2) for what, and 3) how to pray.

I. To Whom we are to Pray.

1. We are to pray "to the one true God only."

a) This God is He “who hath manifested himself to us in his word,” the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. (Compare Ques. 25) Ps. 81 : 8, Matt. 4 : 10.

b) To this God we are to pray, because He alone is everywhere present and almighty, and, therefore, He alone can hear and answer prayer. Ps. 94 : 9; 115 : 6, Eph. 3 : 20.

c) We may also pray to the Lord Jesus, indeed it is our special duty to do so, because He is true God, and to Him belongs the honor of worship. John 5 : 23, Phil. 2 : 10. The disciples of Jesus worshipped Him at His ascension, Luke 24 : 52; Stephen prayed to Him, Acts 7 : 58.

2. We are to pray to the one true God “only,” but not forsooth to the angels, or the Virgin Mary, or the so-called saints. We are not to distinguish, as the Romish Church pretends to do, between “invocation” and “worship,” for invocation in prayer is really worship. Isa. 42 : 8. We do not at all need the saints as “intercessors,” since Christ is our intercessor in heaven (1 John 2 : 1), and the Holy Ghost teaches us to say : Abba, Father. Rom. 8 : 15.

II. For What we are to Pray.

“For all things he hath commanded us to ask of Him.” 1 John 5 : 14. Everything of a carnal nature, for which we might perchance pray, is excluded. 1 Kings 3 : 9-13. It pleased the Lord that Solomon prayed for an understanding heart. “And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies : . . . ; Behold, I have done according to thy words : lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart, . . . That for which thou hast not prayed, I have also given thee, viz., riches and honor.” Matt. 6 : 33, James 4 : 3.

III. How we are to Pray.

To pray acceptably to God, one must pray from the heart in humility and in faith.

1. "Pray from the heart."

a) Devoutly (Andacht, from Andenken, to think upon), *i. e.*, to direct all our thoughts, the whole heart, exclusively upon God, and to check all distracting thoughts. Lam. 3 : 41, Ps. 145 : 18, Heb. 10 : 22.

b) In this way alone can we prevent prayer from becoming a mere lip-service, or from becoming a repetition of beautiful phrases. Matt. 15 : 8 ; 6 : 7.

c) Prayer should be devout, whether one prays in one's own words, or in the words of another. To pray "from the heart" means something more than to pray heartily. By it free prayer is meant, or that one pray in one's own words, in distinction from prayer in the words of another, as by means of prayer books, hymn books or forms prescribed by the Church for religious service and worship. The necessity for these forms is found in the demand for order and uniformity, but free prayer should follow the sermon. The use of prayer books in family worship may be compared to crutches, but if they are in accordance with the Word of God and breathe the spirit of prayer, they are not to be rejected, since it is always better to use crutches than not to walk at all. For prayer from the heart no rules can be prescribed ; for this the only teacher is the Holy Ghost (Rom. 8 : 26) and the proper models are the Psalms, the prayer book, as well as the hymn book of the children of God from of old. As a guide in prayer from the heart the explanation of the several petitions of the Lord's Prayer is put in the catechism in the form of prayer.

2. "That we rightly and thoroughly know our need and misery, that so we may deeply humble ourselves in the presence of His divine majesty."

a) The natural man can not pray in the true sense of the word, because he is encompassed with pride. Rev. 3: 17.

“Necessity teaches one to pray,” *i. e.*, it drives to prayer when one “rightly and thoroughly” knows his bodily and spiritual needs and miseries, and at the same time his own helplessness and unworthiness. Isa. 26: 16.

b) This knowledge, as well as the infinite exaltation (majesty) of God, before whom we appear in prayer, prompts us to humility. Ezra 9: 6, Isa. 6: 2-5. Abraham was an example of an humble intercessor. Gen. 18: 27.

An humble prayer is acceptable to the Lord. Ps. 34: 18.

3. Such humility does not lead to discouragement, when the third part of prayer acceptable to God, the confidence of faith, is not wanting. “That we be fully persuaded, that he, notwithstanding we are unworthy of it, will, for the sake of Christ our Lord, certainly hear our prayer.” God does not look upon the unworthiness of the believing petitioner, but upon the merits of His dear Son, who represents the one who prays before the Father; to this we must firmly hold by faith. Dan. 9: 18, James 1: 6. Jacob is an example of one who prayed in confidence and who took fast hold of the Lord in faith. Gen. 32: 26.

4. Prayer in the name of Jesus includes all that belongs to a prayer acceptable to God. It means to pray

a) At His bidding. John 16: 24.

b) In accordance with His will. Luke 22: 42.

c) Upon the ground of His merit, for the sake of which the Father looks upon us graciously, and without which we could not appear before Him in prayer. Eph. 3: 12.

d) In accordance with His promise. John 14: 13.

IV. Why our Prayer is Heard by God.

1. God's answer to the prayer of the believing soul is the hearing, *i. e.*, the granting of that which is asked. The basis of the same with God is not the person of the petitioner, or the character of the prayer, but His promise. Ps. 91 : 15, Isa. 65 : 24, John 16 : 23.

2. Examples of prayers that were heard : Elijah, James 5 : 17 ; Peter at the raising of Tabitha, Acts 9 : 40 ; the Church at Jerusalem when Peter was in prison, Acts 12 : 5.

3. God gives to the believing soul, by the testimony of the Holy Ghost, the assurance that his prayer will be heard. 1 John 5 : 15. In an extraordinary manner God gave assurance of the hearing of their prayer to the first Church at Jerusalem, Acts 4 : 31, and to the Apostle Paul and Silas, Acts 16 : 26.

4. The answer to prayer does not always come immediately. God reserves His own time for all things. Eccles. 3 : 11, John 2 : 4. God wishes to try our faith. Hab. 2 : 3. Example : The Canaanitish woman, Matt. 15 : 22. Or God wishes to exercise us in perseverance in prayer. Ps. 22 : 2. Example : The parable of the unjust judge and the widow. Luke 18.

5. At times what is prayed for is not granted at all, just as a father refuses the unreasonable or even injurious requests of his child for the child's own good. Example : The prayer of Salome and her sons. Matt. 20 : 20-22. Or our prayers are not in accord with God's gracious counsel concerning us, according to which He allows all things to work together for the good of those who love Him, who are the elect according to His purpose (Rom. 8 : 28), so that He may not grant our prayer for protection against a germinating evil. Example : Paul (2 Cor. 12 : 6-9), who had prayed thrice that the thorn in the flesh might depart

from him, received, instead of having it granted, an answer, which at the same time was full of comfort: "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Under such circumstances we are not to persist in our prayers, just as Paul acquiesced in the answer when he had besought the Lord "thrice."

6. Examples of prayer: Abraham, Gen. 18: 23-32; Jacob, Gen. 32: 9-12, 26; Moses, Ex. 32, 33, 34; Hannah, 1 Sam. 1: 2; David, 2 Sam. 7 and the Psalms; Solomon, 1 Kings 3; Hezekiah, Isa. 38; Jesus, Matt. 26: 39-44. Compare Paul (2 Cor. 12: 7-9, also "thrice").

Question 118.

What hath God commanded us to ask of him?

All things necessary for soul and body; which Christ our Lord has comprised in that prayer he himself has taught us.

1. We are to pray for "all things necessary," *i. e.*, for everything needful to the well-being of body and soul. On this account prayer to God is not only a privilege, but is also commanded. Phil. 4: 6, James 1: 17.

a) Under spiritual need is included all that is necessary for us in relation to God's honor and our own salvation, such as forgiveness of sins, renewal by the Holy Ghost, living according to the will of God and eternal life. Ps. 51: 10, 11; 143: 10, James 1: 5. Spiritual need takes the precedence over bodily need, because the immortal soul stands higher than the mortal body, and eternal happiness higher than temporal. Matt. 6: 33; 16: 26.

b) Under bodily need is included everything necessary for our support in an honorable life, such as health, food and clothing, possessions, a peaceful life, etc. Prov. 30: 8, James 5: 15.

c) Prayers for the supply of our spiritual needs we

may address to God without reservation ; in relation to our bodily needs we are to pray with the condition that God would give us when and what He pleases.

2. Prayer for the supply of spiritual and bodily needs is to conform to the pattern of the prayer Christ Himself has taught us. Matt. 6 : 9-13, Luke 11 : 2-4.

a) When His disciples asked Him : Lord, teach us to pray, as also John (the Baptist) taught his disciples, Jesus gave them this prayer. (John had also taught his disciples a form of prayer.) That they were to use the same literally, is proved by the words of the Lord : " When ye pray, say," etc. Accordingly it is entirely proper that this prayer be used in the public congregation. Jesus did not lead His disciples in this prayer, so as to include Himself in it (compare, " forgive us our debts"), but He taught them the prayer that they might use it.

b) The Lord did not wish to teach His disciples one prayer only, but He would also teach them to pray ; it is, therefore, to serve not merely as a form of prayer, but also as a model prayer according to contents and form, in order that we may learn from it what and how we are to pray. That the Apostles themselves understood it in this way, is already to be inferred from the fact that this prayer is expressed in different forms by Matthew and Luke. At the same time it will remain for all time the prayer of prayers, and embraces everything needful for body and soul, for time and eternity.

Question 119.

What are the words of that prayer ?

Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

1. The prayer is known as "the Lord's Prayer," because the Lord Himself gave it; as "our Father," in accordance with the words at the beginning.

2. The division of the prayer into three parts.

a) It begins with an address: Our Father, which art in heaven.

b) It contains six petitions.

(1) Hallowed be thy name.

(2) Thy kingdom come.

(3) Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

(4) Give us this day our daily bread.

(5) And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

(6) And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

c) It closes with a doxology: "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever," and with "Amen."

3. The first three petitions relate to God's honor, the next three to our needs. Of these, two have reference to our spiritual and one to our bodily needs. (The fourth petition refers to the body—bread; the fifth to the soul—sin; the sixth to body and soul—evil.) The petitions do not use the singular "my," but the plural "our" and "us," thereby partaking of the nature of intercession, and reminding us that we stand in a communion of prayer with all believers. Intercessory prayer enlarges the heart and smothers selfishness. (The first three petitions correspond to the first table, and the last three to the second table of the law.)

4. The sixth petition, "lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," can not be divided into two petitions, as it forms, in thought as well as in construction, a whole.

Question 120.

Why hath Christ commanded us to address God thus, "Our Father?"

That immediately, in the very beginning of our prayer, he might excite in us a childlike reverence for, and confidence in God, which are the foundation of our prayer; namely that God is become our father in Christ, and will much less deny us what we ask of him in true faith, than our parents refuse us earthly things.

Question 121.

Why is there added, "which art in heaven?"

Lest we should form any earthly conceptions of God's heavenly majesty, and that we may expect from his almighty power all things necessary for soul and body.

I. Our Father.

1. We are to address God as Father; for in this name is expressed His infinite love. The name does not merely include God the Father, the Father of Jesus Christ, but the Triune God is invoked thereby as "our Father." Gal. 4 : 6.

2. The Triune God is our Father :

a) By creation and redemption. Mal. 2 : 10 is spoken primarily not of all men, but of Israel, the people of God. Isa. 63 : 16, John 1 : 12.

b) By election. Eph. 1 : 5, 6.

c) By regeneration. 1 Peter 1 : 3.

Therefore only the regenerated, believing Christian, the child of God, can in the true sense of the word pray "Our Father." To the natural man God stands in the relation of judge, not that of Father.

3. The paternal love of God, which is expressed in the name Father, is to awaken in us childlike fear and confidence in God.

a) Childlike fear carries with it the feeling of awe, *i. e.*, reverence, but not that of dread of God. Rom. 8 : 15, "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear (and in fear and dread to flee from God, as

for example Israel, Ex. 20 : 18, 19) ; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.”

b) Childlike confidence is a firm trust in the paternal love of God. Ps. 89 : 26 ; 103 : 13.

4. This confidence rests upon the fact “that God is become our Father in Christ, and will much less deny us what we ask of Him in true faith, than our parents will refuse us earthly things.”

a) God has become our Father in Christ (compare Ques. 26 and 33), and in Him gives us all things. Rom. 8 : 32.

b) Divine paternal love far exceeds human love. Matt. 7 : 11, Isa. 49 : 15.

5. The address “Our Father” stands “in the very beginning,” in order that our entire prayer may be pervaded by that childlike confidence, which is “the foundation of our prayer.” It is the key-note of the prayer. Heb. 4 : 16.

II. Which art in Heaven.

1. Literally, “in the heavens,” while the third petition says “in heaven.” We distinguish 1) the atmospheric heaven (the atmosphere, *e. g.*, the birds of heaven, Ps. 104 : 12) ; 2) the starry heaven (*e. g.*, the heavens and all their host, Ps. 33 : 6), and 3) the place of the glory of God. Ps. 103 : 19. The last is to be understood here and in the third petition. Although God is everywhere, and is nigh unto us in all places, yet we are to address Him in “heaven,” in order that we may continue mindful of His majesty, *i. e.*, His exaltation and dominion over all creatures. Ps. 113 : 5, 6, 7.

2 We derive a two-fold benefit from keeping “God’s heavenly majesty” in view.

a) “That we do not form any earthly conceptions of Him,” *i. e.*, do not form any earthly notions concern-

ing Him. 1 Kings 8 : 27. We are to pray in confidence, but we are to guard against unseemly intimacy with God in prayer ; our Father is also our God. We are to pray in a childlike manner, but not childish (with effeminate feelings and expressions). A child, in his intercourse with his father, will never neglect the reverence which is due to him, just as we do not forget that the ruler of a country is also its lord.

Example: Abraham, although the Lord spake to him in great condescension, "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" (Gen. 18 : 17) and he was called the Friend of God (James 2 : 23), yet he says (v. 27) : "Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes."

b) That we may not think lightly of God's heavenly majesty, nor doubt the same, but "expect from his almighty power all things necessary for soul and body," and trust in Him that He can do and give all things. Ps. 115 : 3, Luke 1 : 37, Rom. 10 : 12.

Question 122.

Which is the first petition ?

"HALLOWED BE THY NAME;" that is, grant us first rightly to know thee, and to sanctify, glorify and praise thee in all thy works, in which thy power, wisdom, goodness, justice, mercy and truth, are clearly displayed ; and further also, that we may so order and direct our whole lives, our thoughts, words and actions, as that thy name may never be blasphemed, but rather honored and praised on our account.

That the Name of God be Hallowed.

This is the first petition :

1. Because the glorification of God is the first and highest end of all creatures. Rom. 11 : 36.

2. Because all who would approach God in prayer, must be impressed with His excellence and holiness. Lev. 10 : 3.

The name of God is to be hallowed, 1) by us, and 2) through us.

I. By Us.

1. God revealed Himself by His name, which we learn to know in His Word and in His works. The name of God sets forth His being, and, therefore, Himself; in the works of God “are displayed,” *i. e.*, are visible His attributes.

To hallow God’s name means, to give God the honor which belongs to Him. Ps. 115: 1.

2. Above all we pray that God Himself would let us rightly know His name. Such knowledge, however, is not merely a matter of the understanding, but also of the heart, as at the same time it includes faith also. John 17: 3, Ps. 119: 18.

3. The knowledge of the name of God is derived from the knowledge of His works.

a) The work of creation, whereby God has created and still preserves all things. Ps. 19: 1.

b) The work of redemption, whereby God has redeemed us through Christ and renews us by the Holy Ghost, and will make us eternally happy. John 3: 16.

4. In these works are displayed, *i. e.*, appear the essential attributes of God.

a) In the works of creation :

1. God’s power. Rom. 1: 19, 20.

2. His wisdom. Ps. 104: 24.

3. His goodness. Ps. 36: 5.

b) In the work of redemption :

1. God’s justice. 2 Cor. 5: 21.

2. His mercy. Tit. 3: 5.

3. His truth. John 17: 19.

4. We give expression to the knowledge of the excellence and holiness of God, which we have derived from His works, by glorifying and praising His name. Ps. 105: 3, Ex. 15: 2.

II. Through Us.

1. Not merely in our prayers are we to glorify and praise the name of God, but our whole life, all our thoughts, words, and works are to be an act of praise to God, that through us His name may be hallowed, *i. e.*, that it may be made manifest what a glorious God is ours, who makes saints of sinners ! Ps. 31 : 3, 2 Thess. 1 : 11, 12.

2. We must, therefore, “so order and direct our whole lives :”

a) That the name of God may never be blasphemed on our account, which would happen if we confess the name of the Lord and do not live according to His Word. He who confesses the name of Jesus with his mouth, but not in his life, either deceives himself, which is sad, or he would deceive others by acting the hypocrite, which is still worse. 2 Tim. 2 : 19, Rom. 14 : 16.

b) That through our conversation and life others also may be incited to turn to God, and thereby to honor and to praise him. Ps. 51 : 13, Matt. 5 : 16.

Question 123.

Which is the second petition ?

“**THY KINGDOM COME ;**” that is, rule us so by thy word and Spirit, that we may submit ourselves more and more to thee ; preserve and increase thy Church ; destroy the works of the devil, and all violence which would exalt itself against thee, and also all wicked counsels devised against thy holy word, until the full perfection of thy kingdom takes place, wherein thou shalt be all in all.

1. The kingdom of God is distinguished from creation or nature, in which God manifests His sovereignty over all created things (Ps. 135 : 6), and also from the world, which through sin is under the dominion of the prince of darkness. 1 John 5 : 19.

2. The kingdom of God is in the world, but not of

the world (John 18 : 36), *i. e.*, it is not after the fashion of a world-kingdom ; it extends beyond the world into heaven, from which it arose (Dan. 2 : 44), wherefore it is also called the kingdom of heaven ; in the same way it also extends beyond time into eternity (Dan. 4 : 34).

3. The kingdom of God is the realm of the revelation of divine grace, power and glory, in heaven and upon earth. In the world it is found wherever the Triune God rules men's hearts in righteousness and grace. The outward, visible Church, which is composed of all who are baptized, is not the kingdom of God. It is the institution for the gathering and perfecting of the elect of God. The kingdom of God upon earth is, therefore, included in the Church, and in this sense it is true that "out of the Church there is no salvation." (*Extra ecclesiam nulla salus.*)

4. "Kingdom of God" is a figurative expression, derived from earthly, human relations. An earthly kingdom is an orderly community governed by a ruler. God's kingdom is called in Scripture literally "the kingdom of God," and the heavenly kingdom "the kingdom of heaven." 1. The King is the Triune God, and since the completion of redemption, especially the Son of God, Jesus Christ, to whom the Father has given all power in heaven and upon earth (Ps. 110 : 1, 2, Matt. 28 : 18), and who sits at His right hand (Mark 16 : 19), until all shall have been accomplished. 1 Cor. 15 : 27, 28. 2. The real subjects upon earth are Christian believers. John 18 : 37, Ps. 110 : 3. In heaven they are the angels and the saints made perfect. 3. The members of the kingdom are not confined to any land or people upon the earth. Acts 10 : 35. No one is excluded on account of his belonging to any one people. Col. 3 : 11. 4. Therefore there are no limitations to this kingdom. Acts 1 : 8. 5. The law

of the kingdom is the Holy Scripture. Isa. 2 : 3. 6. The fundamental law of the kingdom is love. Matt. 22 : 37-40, Col. 3 : 14. 7. The blessing of the kingdom is redemption through the blood of Jesus Christ, together with all its possessions and benefits. Rom. 14 : 17. 8. The ordinances of the kingdom are the preaching of the Word of God and the administration of the holy sacraments, and everything incidental thereto. Eph. 4 : 11, 12. 9. The arch-enemy of the kingdom is satan, with all his hosts. 10. The wars of the kingdom are directed against the power of sin and the kingdom of darkness. 11. The weapons of the warriors are the Word of God and prayer. Eph. 6 : 12, 17, Matt. 17 : 21. 12. The purpose and end of the kingdom is the honor of God.

5. The kingdom of God is already in the world, and yet we are to pray, Thy kingdom come ; for it is still coming, so that it may become more powerful in us, outside of us, that it may be more widely extended.

I. The Kingdom of Grace.

1. We pray God to govern us, the members of His kingdom and His subjects, *i. e.*, that He direct all our thoughts, purposes and desires, words and deeds according to His grace. Col. 3 : 15, Isa. 48 : 17.

2. God governs us by His Word and Spirit (compare Ques. 31) ; by His Word, Ps. 25 : 4, 5 ; by His Spirit, Ps. 143 : 10. The Word and Spirit of God do not work separately, but conjointly.

3. Its end is that we may subject ourselves more and more to God, *i. e.*, become obedient. The regenerate also have not yet attained perfect obedience, but they must learn the same and increase in it more and more. Not in words, but in obedience to the commandments of God do we recognize how far the kingdom of God has advanced in us. For the kingdom of God is not in

word, but in power. 1 Cor. 4: 20, Ex. 24: 7, Heb. 12: 28.

II. The Kingdom of Power.

1. The work of the kingdom of God upon earth is committed to weak human hands. 1 Cor. 3: 7, 8, 9. Therefore we are to pray that God by the power of His Spirit may maintain and increase His Church.

a) God preserves His Church in that He maintains His Word in it, and when through the indolence of men it has come into disrepute, or has been neglected, He awakens a hunger after the bread of life, or places the word again upon the candlestick. This took place most manifestly in the Reformation, after the Church had entirely neglected His Word and had been sunk for centuries in superstition and the works of men. Ps. 51: 18; 68: 28.

b) Everything living must increase, if it is not to retrograde; in life nothing is stationary. So it is also with the kingdom of the living God upon earth.

Therefore we pray that He should not only inwardly strengthen His Church, but outwardly increase the same. Acts 2: 47.

The spread of the kingdom of God is accomplished among the heathen, the Jews and Mohammedans through missionary activity. We should never pray the Lord's Prayer without remembering especially in connection with the second petition the work of evangelical missions, in which God manifests Himself as the "Augmenter of the kingdom." In the foreign missionary field 6250 missionaries from Christian lands are at present at work, of whom 3000 are ordained and 750 unordained missionaries, and 2500 are women; of heathen Christians 27,000 are missionary laborers, and among them 2506 are ordained pastors. In a hundred years about 3,000,000 heathen have been converted to Christ by the grace of God through the work of evan-

gelical missions of all lands. The blessing of the Lord is manifest in this work. But the number of heathen who are yet strangers to the kingdom is still great, numbering about 800,000,000. Matt. 9: 37, 38.

Parables relating to the extension of the kingdom of God: The grain of mustard seed, Matt. 13: 31, 32; the leaven (v. 33).

2. The kingdom of God stands in opposition to the world and to sin; therefore it is opposed by the world and its prince. To overcome these powers, God must come to our aid, by manifesting the power of His arm and His judgment.

a) We, therefore, pray God to destroy the works of the devil. Everything that is done to injure and oppose the kingdom of God is the devil's work. He opposes the truth of God with his lies which are agreeable to the carnal heart. All the arts designed to seduce men by means of false doctrine into error, superstition and unbelief, into sin and vice, are his works; he also often causes bitterness and strife among those who are of the same household of faith. 1 John 3: 8, Rom. 16: 20, Eph. 4: 27. Compare the parable of the tares among the wheat. Matt. 13: 24, 25, 28.

b) The world which is obedient to him, and those whom he deceives, he uses as his instruments against the kingdom of God. They are the enemies of mankind, who rise up against God in their might, or devise evil counsels against God's holy Word. We pray God to bring to naught both their power and counsel.

(1) The enemies outside of the kingdom of God seek to suppress and destroy it by external means. Pharaoh, Herod. Similar testimony is found in the entire history of the Christian Church, from the time of Julian, the apostate, to Louis XIV., and the tyrants of the French Revolution. The first Christian congregation prayed against the tyrants who persecuted the kingdom of God. Acts 4: 24-30, Ps. 129: 5, Num. 10: 35.

(2) Enemies within the kingdom of God are those who dilute the Word of God within the Church, or adulterate sound doctrine and undermine the foundations of the Church by evil counsels. Therefore we pray God to thwart such efforts. Ps. 83: 3, Phil. 3: 18, Ps. 5: 10.

(3) Prayer for the kingdom strengthens the courage of faith and enjoys the assured promise that the kingdom of God will be maintained even in its direst extremities, and will at length come forth triumphant from all its persecutions. The entire 46th Psalm (from which Luther's battle hymn for the imperial host of God, "A Safe Stronghold is our God," was composed). Matt. 18: 20, Luke 12: 32.

III. The Kingdom of Glory.

The kingdom of God will be made manifest in glory at its consummation at the end of the world. The glory will principally consist in this, that the members of the kingdom will be freed from all weakness which may still cleave to them, as well as from all their temptations and struggles, because God will then be all in all (not in all men, but in all His elect). 1 Cor. 15: 28.

1. To the individual members of the kingdom the glory thereof is revealed at the end of their days. 2 Tim. 4: 18.

2. To the Church, the community of believers, it comes at the end of all days, when Jesus, their Lord and Head, will come again in glory. Rev. 21: 2; 22: 17, 20.

Question 124.

Which is the third petition?

"THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN;" that is, grant that we and all men may renounce our own will, and without murmuring obey thy will, which is only good; that so every one may attend to, and perform the duties of his station and calling, as willingly and faithfully as the angels do in heaven.

I. Renouncing One's Own Will.

1. By nature the will of man is evil, corrupt, and turned against God's will. Therefore it is necessary for us to renounce our own self-asserting will, *i. e.*, renounce our evil lusts, desires and inclinations, suppress the same, and subdue the will. Matt. 16 : 24.

2. We often experience great difficulty in doing this, and it involves a struggle, in which, without God's gracious help, we cannot prevail; wherefore we are to pray: Grant unto us, O God, strength to overcome. 2 Cor. 3 : 5.

3. We are to make this prayer also for all men, because they all by nature have this corrupt will, and our love is to embrace all men. Eccles. 12 : 13.

II. Obedience to the Will of God.

1. As our own will is by nature totally corrupt, so God's will is only good. As little as we can of ourselves renounce our own will, so little can we subject our hearts to the will of God. Therefore we are to pray: Grant unto us, give us strength that we may obey thy will. Jer. 7 : 23.

2. There is a distinction to be made between the secret and the revealed will of God.

a) The secret will of God we can discern only in the way in which He leads us, which we often do not understand. We are, therefore, to pray for strength that we may submit to His will without gainsaying, and to yield ourselves to the same without murmuring. His will is to be done in us. 1 Peter 4 : 19. Acts 21 : 14, "The will of the Lord be done." Thus spake the Christians in Cesarea, when Paul was journeying to Jerusalem, where he was to be arrested, and when he would not allow himself to be turned back.

b) The revealed will of God we learn from His Word, the Law and the Gospel. In particular cases

we must be careful not to deceive ourselves and regard as God's will what we would like to have and to do. Rom. 12: 2.

3. There are circumstances and relations in life, when God's will is to be done by us, and other relations when it is to be done in us, viz., when we suffer according to God's will for the same reason for which we do His will. Heb. 10: 36.

4. Christ has given to us the most exalted example in His life and in His sufferings of how God's will is to be done, both by us and in us. John 4: 34, Luke 22: 42.

III. The Fulfillment of our Calling.

1. We are not to think that we are to do God's will only in particular acts. The truth is, rather, that daily and hourly we have opportunity to do the same in our station and calling, *i. e.*, in the duties and responsibilities which the special positions of life place upon each one; and we often find the small and simple duties of life, which recur daily, more difficult than the performance of something great.

Every one is to be contented in his station and calling, *i. e.*, in the position in life appointed him by God, and whatever it brings with it, he is to perform willingly, cheerfully, faithfully and carefully. 1 Cor. 7: 20, Luke 16: 10.

2. As the angels in heaven, viz., as willingly and faithfully, the children of God are to fulfill their calling upon earth. Ps. 103: 20, 21.

The example of the angels is to have an effect upon us, because we are their companions in the kingdom of God. Heb. 12: 22, 23.

Question 125.

Which is the fourth petition ?

“GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD;” that is, be pleased to provide us with all things necessary for the body, that we may thereby acknowledge thee to be the only fountain of all good, and that neither our care nor industry nor even thy gifts, can profit us without thy blessing, and that we may withdraw our trust from all creatures, and place it alone in thee.

1. By “our daily bread” we are to understand all the physical necessities of life. They are called bread, because it is the most indispensable for the support of the bodily life.

2. That is our bread which we do not procure by unlawful means, as by theft, covetousness, cheating or begging, but such as we pray for and labor for in our ordinary calling. Gen. 3: 19, 2 Thess. 3: 12.

“Work and pray.” (Proverb.)

3. By daily bread we understand everything that we need for the day in order to live. Heb. 13: 5.

All believers have a filial right to daily bread. Matt. 7: 8, 9, 11.

4. Give unto us. In this connection we are not only to think of ourselves and of our own needs, but also of those who are in want. Isa. 58: 7.

5. This day. We are not to pray for provisions for days and years to come, which fosters covetousness and parsimony, and which prayer God will not hear. The expression also teaches us that we are to come to God with our prayer every day. Matt. 6: 34.

Neither do we know whether we will be alive yet and in need of bread on the morrow. Prov. 27: 1.

6. We also pray that God would provide us with all the physical necessities of life. Ps. 145: 15, 16.

7. From this prayer we are to learn: 1) to recognize that God is the fountain of all good; 2) that without His blessing nothing can prosper; 3) to place our

trust in Him alone. Thus 1) our faith is strengthened, 2) our humility is promoted, 3) our confidence is increased.

I. That God is the Fountain of All Good.

1. Although our daily bread is a natural product, it does not come from nature, not from the creature, but from the Creator. Ps. 104: 13, 14, Acts 14: 15, 17.

2. Therefore we are to pray to Him, the Giver of all good, for our daily bread. Ps. 85: 12; 65: 2.

II. That Without God's Blessing Nothing Can Profit Us.

1. The blessing of God crowns our labor with success, which He alone can give, and constitutes the strength of our food. 1 Cor. 3: 7, Prov. 10: 22, Deut. 8: 3, Matt. 4: 4.

2. The credit is not to be given to our anxieties and labor, although these are our portion. For by cares are not to be understood worldly cares, to which God does not give His blessing, for they are an offense to Him, but the careful and thoughtful attention to our labors, how we are to begin them at the right time and in the right way, and carry them to completion. Ps. 127: 1, 2.

3. Even the smallest of God's gifts may by His blessing be increased so as to supply our wants. Compare the widow's cruse of oil at Zarephath. 1 Kings 17: 14-16; and the feeding of the thousands, Mark 6: 41, 42; 8: 6-8.

On the contrary, without God's blessing His gifts cannot profit, *i. e.*, fulfil their purpose. Lev. 26: 5, 14, 26, Hag. 2: 17, 19.

"Everything depends upon God's blessing." (Prov. 10: 4.)

III. That We Place Our Trust Alone in God.

1. The human heart is too much inclined to seek refuge with the creature, *i. e.*, with other men, and to

rely upon the ordinary natural course of things. But all creatures, as well as the entire creation, are in God's hands. We are not to place our trust in the creature, but in the Creator, and in Him alone.

a) Confidence in weak, mortal men is vain ; for either they are not able or not willing to help us. On the contrary, God can and will give His own all the necessities of life.

b) God is thereby displeased, for such a reliance in man is at the same time distrust of God. But He is honored by us as is becoming when we put all our confidence in Him alone, since He is the fountain of all good.

2. He who prays to God needs not beg of men. Ps. 146: 3, 5; 62: 10; 55: 22.

3. In one of the persecutions which in the 17th century came upon the Reformed ministers of Scotland, Andrew Duncan was driven into banishment, and with his wife and six children was reduced to direst need. One evening, when the children cried for bread, and none was to be had, the poor exile sought refuge in God by prayer, to whom he committed his hungry children and his wife, who was approaching confinement, deprived of every necessity. Thereupon he admonished his family to wait patiently upon God, who was now chastening them, but who would surely care for them, even if He must rain bread from heaven. There was no one in the place nor in the region who knew them or was aware of their need. The next morning very early a man came into the house, who brought them a sack of provisions and went away again without telling them whence he came, although they begged him to do so. When not long thereafter in the night Duncan's wife approached her hour and no human help was nigh, there came a lady of rank and offered her services, and after sending away her servant with

her carriage, asked permission to be allowed to remain with the lonely woman. This she did throughout a number of days and nights until her services were no longer needed, and at her departure left what their most pressing needs required. Notwithstanding all their entreaties, she would neither say who she was nor whence she came.

Question 126.

Which is the fifth petition ?

“AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS, AS WE FORGIVE OUR DEBTORS;” that is, be pleased for the sake of Christ’s blood not to impute to us, poor sinners, our transgressions, nor that depravity which always cleaves to us; even as we feel this evidence of thy grace in us, that it is our firm resolution from the heart to forgive our neighbor.

In the law God tells us what He demands of us and what we owe, *i. e.*, are in duty bound to do. We owe what according to the law of God is our duty to do, but have not done (whether it be through transgression or omission). Every transgression against God to the extent to which it demands atonement, *i. e.*, recompense, is sin. Atonement for sin and guilt is made either by restitution or by punishment, and as we cannot render the former, the latter only remains. Punishment can be remitted to us only by the forgiveness of the debt. We pray therefore: forgive us our debts, *i. e.*, we acknowledge that we are in debt; but we can render no satisfaction, and yet would become free from guilt and punishment. Therefore we take refuge in His grace.

I. Our Debts.

1. Confession must be preceded by knowledge.

a) In the first place sin is recognized in its outward manifestations as transgression (*i. e.*, as consisting of perverted, evil deeds, acts which are contrary to the law). Ps. 90: 8, 1 John 3: 4.

b) Not only the transgression, but also its root, the evil in the heart which always cleaves to us, the evil desire and inclination, is sin before God. Heb. 12 : 1, Gen. 6 : 5 ; 8 : 21.

2. According to His holiness and justice God must account us guilty, *i. e.*, hold us responsible and punish us. Job 9 : 2, 3, Isa. 65 : 6, 7. They are called “debts,” on account of the multitude of individual sins. Ps. 19 : 12. “Our debts,” because we are also to pray for the forgiveness of the sins of all the people of God, in whose communion we stand. Neh. 1 : 6. In this are to be included the sins of our enemies which they have committed against us. Matt. 5 : 44, Luke 23 : 34.

II. God's Forgiveness.

1. In the prayer “forgive us our debts” we take refuge in the grace of God, in that we acknowledge ourselves guilty, indeed as “poor sinners” who have not within themselves the power to pay the debt, to put away sin. Ps. 38 : 4.

2. Therefore we pray God not to impute to us our debt, not to demand any payment from us, neither as restitution which we cannot render, nor as punishment which we cannot bear. Ps. 51 : 1, Rom. 4 : 8. Example : The publican in the temple. Luke 18 : 13, 14.

3. For this we appeal to our surety, Jesus Christ, who has paid the debt for us. “For the sake of Christ's blood.” Eph. 1 : 7.

4. We need to pray daily for the forgiveness of our debts, because we sin daily. This was also the significance of the morning and evening sacrifice of the children of Israel, at each of which a lamb was slain. Num. 28 : 3, 4.

III. Forgiveness by God Demands a Forgiving Heart.

1. As God forgives us, so also we are to forgive our debtors, *i. e.*, forgive the debts of all those who have

sinned against us. This is to be done from the heart, *i. e.*, freely and fully. Matt. 18 : 21, 22.

2. That we cherish this "firm resolution," *i. e.*, are earnestly and at all times ready to forgive, testifies to the grace of God in us, which alone can soften the hard heart and bring about a forgiving spirit, and is at the same time an evidence of our thankfulness to God for the forgiveness of our debts. 1 John 3 : 14, Col. 3 : 13.

3. On the other hand, a forgiving heart is also a condition of God's forgiving our debts, but in no way a reason. The two are entirely distinct. Christ says immediately after the Lord's Prayer, Matt. 6 : 14, 15, "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you : But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." The explanation is found in the parable of the wicked servant. Matt. 18 : 23-35. The Lord remitted the debt of the servant unconditionally over and above his request, but when he treated his fellow-servants with severity, the Lord withdrew from him His grace and delivered him to his deserved punishment. Verse 35.

Cyprian (Bishop of Carthage, died 258) : "The prayer for food is followed by the prayer for forgiveness of debts, that he who is fed by God, may live in God and may think not only of the present, temporal life, but also of the eternal life, to which he can attain only when his sins are forgiven. This petition is an excellent confession of the Church, acknowledging and bewailing her sins, and at the same time a comfort, because in response to it she receives the forgiveness of sins in accordance with the promise of Christ. Finally it is also an obligation to mutual forgiveness. Christ has in view, therefore, in this petition : 1) that we should acknowledge our sins ; 2) that we should thirst after the forgiveness of sins, because only those become

partakers of it who earnestly desire the same, and who do not trample under foot the blood of the Son of God ; 3) that our faith may be exercised, because this petition proceeds from faith and at the same time again strengthens faith ; for faith is the source of this petition, and this petition again is the occasion of faith, because it has reference to its growth."

Question 127.

Which is the sixth petition ?

"AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION, BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL;" that is, since we are so weak in ourselves that we cannot stand a moment; and besides this, since our mortal enemies, the devil, the world, and our own flesh, cease not to assault us, do thou, therefore, preserve and strengthen us by the power of thy Holy Spirit, that we may not be overcome in this spiritual warfare, but constantly and strenuously may resist our foes, until at last we obtain a complete victory.

1. To tempt means, 1) to put one on trial as God tried Abraham at the offering of his son Isaac, Gen. 22 : 1, Deut. 13 : 3, or as Jesus tried Philip at the feeding of the multitude, John 6 : 5, 6 ; 2) To incite one to evil. Here it has the second meaning in the sense that God has given us to the devil, the world or our own flesh to tempt us. For no temptation can come upon us without the will of God. Matt. 4 : 1. Thus God leads into temptation. In the same manner the tempter can only exercise his art upon the children of God when he is permitted to do so by God, as we see in the case of Job. Job 1 : 12 ; 2 : 6. Only the testing proceeds from God, but not the incitement to evil. James 1 : 13.

We pray therefore: 1) That God would not deliver us to our enemies to tempt us ; 2) That if it should be His will so to do according to His counsel, we be not tempted beyond what we are able to bear, but that God would keep and strengthen us in the temptation.

Calvin, in reference to the passage, James 1 : 13, says : "It is clearly apparent that the outward temptations of

which the apostle made mention in vv. 2-12, are sent to us by God. In this sense God tempted Abraham (Gen. 22), and tempts us daily, i. e., He puts us on trial in that opportunity is given us to reveal our disposition. But it is something entirely different to bring to the surface what is hidden in the heart, from inwardly inciting the heart to evil passions. In this connection the reference is to inward temptations, which are nothing else but the inordinate desires tempting us to sin. The apostle rightly denies that God is their author, because they come forth from our corrupt nature. This reminder is necessary because nothing is more common among men than to ascribe the cause of the evil they do to another, and they feel most free of all when they can shift the responsibility upon God Himself. This artful device to cover one's tracks was resorted to by our first parents, and we eagerly imitate them in this respect. Therefore James leads us to the acknowledgment of our own guilt that we may not misrepresent God as if He Himself had incited us to sin. To this seems to be opposed the tenor of that Scripture which teaches that man has been blinded by God, has been given over to a reprobate mind and to shameful and forbidden lusts. To this I reply that perhaps on this very account James was led to deny that we are tempted of God, because the wicked are fond of furnishing Scripture proof in extenuation of their conduct. But two things are to be noticed in this connection: When the Scriptures attribute the blinding and hardening of the heart to God (Ex. 9: 12), it does not set Him forth either as the beginner or as the author thereof, so that the responsibility would fall upon Him. James is here concerned with these two points only. Do the Scriptures maintain that those rejected by the Lord are given over to abominable lusts (Rom. 1: 26), because perchance the Lord leads astray and corrupts their heart? In no wise; for it is subjec-

ted to evil lusts because it is already sinful and corrupt. Or when God blinds or hardens, is He then the author or servant of sin? Much rather does He in this way punish sin and gives the wicked who will not be controlled by His spirit, their just deserts. It, therefore, follows that neither the origin of sin lies in God nor can the cause of it be ascribed to Him as if He found pleasure in evil. Lastly it is a vain subterfuge when a man seeks to lay the burden of his sins upon God because all evil of every sort comes from nowhere except from the corrupt inclination of man. And the fact is that we are urged on in no other way, but each one is led and impelled by his own corrupt desires. That God tempts no one is confirmed by this fact, that He Himself is not tempted by evil. Therefore it is only the devil who incites us to sin, because he is utterly consumed by a burning desire to sin. God has no pleasure in evil and is not the author thereof when we do evil."

2. "Deliver us from the evil one" is altogether to be preferred to the rendering "from evil," as the former expression embraces both the evil one and evil, and "evil" also embraces sin as well as evil. The Greek expression for the "evil one," i. e., the devil, occurs in Matt. 5 : 37 (where it cannot mean "evil"); Matt. 13 : 19, 38, Eph. 6 : 16, 2 Thess. 3 : 3, John 17 : 15, 1 John 2 : 13, 14; 3 : 12; 5 : 18, 19.

I. The Combatants.

1. On the one side "in this spiritual warfare" are the children of God, who, however, are so weak in themselves that they cannot for one moment stand in their own strength. Matt. 26 : 41, John 15 : 5.

Peter in his presumption is an example of warning to us. Matt. 26 : 33. He fell more deeply when he was tempted than almost any other Christian. v. 74.

2. On the other side, are the "enemies which we have renounced, the devil, the world and our own flesh," all

of them strong confederates to whom all means are lawful.

a) "Enemies which we have renounced" are those from whose good will and friendship we have withdrawn ourselves. The so-called "renunciation" formerly preceded every feud; it was the same as that which to-day yet in general is the declaration of war. But these enemies are so embittered against us because they have lost their control over us by our renunciation.

b) Their weapons are lying and deception, by which they force their way in upon us through temptations and assaults. At one time we are brought to despair by sorrow and want, or to unbelief by our doubts, at another time we are led astray into presumption by riches and prosperity.

1. The chief enemy is the devil, "the ancient Prince of Hell," "strong mail of Craft and Power he weareth in this hour." The world and the flesh are his soldiers. 1 Peter 5: 8, Luke 22: 31.

He does not always come as a roaring lion, but oftentimes also as an angel of light, just as he did when he used Scripture in the temptation of the Savior. 2 Cor. 11: 14. With all sorts of flattering insinuations he wishes to betray the children of God into false security or pride, and thereby bring about their ruin. "Dear pastor, what a beautiful sermon you preached to-day," was remarked to a minister at the church door. "So I was informed by the devil when I left the pulpit," was the further comment of the minister.

When John Knox (d. Nov. 24, 1572), the Reformer of Scotland, lay upon his death bed, a friend found him the evening before the day of his death in a restless slumber broken by heavy sighs. After he awoke he asked him why he had sighed so deeply. Knox answered: "I have in my life endured many assaults of Satan through his holding up before me my sins to bring

me to despair; but God gave me strength to overcome his temptations. Now the crafty serpent which never ceases its tempting has taken another course, seeking to persuade me that my many labors in my spiritual calling and my faithfulness in the service of God have secured for me heaven and eternal life. But praised be the Lord who has given me strength to quench these fiery darts by bringing to my mind such passages of Scripture as these: What hast thou that thou didst not receive? and by the grace of God I am what I am. In the face of these passages Satan has gone away ashamed and will not return again, for I have been assured that the end of my struggle is near, and that I shall soon exchange without pain and anxiety this mortal and miserable life for that happy and eternal one."

2. The world, i. e., wicked men and every opportunity to enter into temptation in daily life, seeks at one time through its allurements, at another time by threats, to draw us again under its corrupting influence, after we have escaped the same by following after Christ. Prov. 1: 10, John 15: 19.

3. Our own flesh, i. e., the inclination to sin which still cleaves to the children of God, as the inclination to intemperance, unchastity, to pride, etc. Gal. 5: 17, James 1: 14.

II. Our Help.

These enemies which abound on every hand, without and within, no less than the knowledge of our own weakness, impel us to pray that God would keep us and strengthen us by the power of the Holy Ghost. Matt. 26: 41. Paul besought the Lord thrice that Satan's angel might depart from him. 2 Cor. 12: 7, 8.

2. The Lord sends help to His own through the Holy Ghost. Eph. 3: 16.

3. The effect of this help is shown in this, that we are not weakened by these assaults, but become stronger under them. 2 Thess. 3: 3.

This effect we see plainly in the disciples of the Lord after they had received the Holy Ghost. The men who a few weeks before were deserting the Lord and were fearful, became heroes, enduring ignominy and persecution, imprisonment and stripes, and it was afterwards said of them, Acts 5: 41, "And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name."

III. Conflict and Victory.

1. The attacks of our enemies in this conflict and warfare are incessant, and, therefore, the manner of warfare appointed for us is that of resistance, *i. e.*, we are not to allow ourselves to be led or driven by temptation and assault whither the evil one would lead us. Eph. 6: 10, 11, 13. "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

a) Against the devil. James 4: 7.

b) Against the world. 1 John 2: 15.

c) Against our own flesh. Col. 3: 5.

2. Notwithstanding the promised and proffered help of God, there is many a discomfiture in this conflict if we do not use the help aright or are not sufficiently watchful. We must, therefore, always pray that "we may not be overcome in this spiritual warfare," and if we should at any time fall, that the Lord would graciously lift us up again. The look of Jesus raised again fallen Peter when he had yielded to temptation and assault. Luke 22: 61, 62. On the other hand, Judas after his fall went and hanged himself after the Lord's hand had been withdrawn from him. Matt. 27: 5.

3. The last conflict, which yet awaits not merely the individual Christian, but the entire Church of the Lord, is the great temptation, which through anti-

Christ is to come upon all the world. Rev. 3 : 10, 2 Thess. 2 : 3, Matt. 24 : 21, 22.

4. "Until at last we obtain a complete victory." For this we pray, for this we struggle, and the Lord, the Prince of our salvation, will certainly grant it, because He has promised it.

a) Over the evil one and over evil. Rom. 16 : 20, 1 Thess. 5 : 23.

b) Over death. Ps. 31 : 5. Compare Luke 23 : 46.

c) Over all evil. 2 Tim. 4 : 18.

Question 128.

How dost thou conclude thy prayer ?

"FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, THE POWER, AND THE GLORY, FOREVER;" that is, all these we ask of thee, because thou art our King, and Almighty, art willing and able to give us all good ; and all this we pray for, that thereby not we, but thy holy name, may be glorified forever.

1. Praise to God (a doxology) in this threefold form (kingdom, power, glory) we first find in 1 Chron. 29 : 9-13, "and David, the king, also rejoiced with great joy. Wherefore David blessed the Lord before all the congregation, and David said : "Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel, our Father, **for ever and ever**. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty ; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine ; thine is the **kingdom**, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come of thee, and thou reignest over all ; and in thine hand is **power** and might, and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now, therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise Thy glorious name."

2. The conclusion of the Lord's Prayer ("for . . .") is the foundation upon which the entire prayer rests. For it embraces the grounds which encourage us to pray and prompt God to hear our prayer.

I. God Will Hear Us.

1. For He is our King and we are the subjects of His kingdom, for whom He will provide according to His grace all things necessary for body and soul. Ps. 74: 12.

2. Thine is the kingdom, that is: "Heavenly Father, we acknowledge Thee as the only Lord and King of heaven and earth; Thou hast created all things, and governest all, for Thine honor, as well as for the furtherance of our salvation. Thou hast counted us worthy to be subjects here of Thy kingdom of grace, and yonder of eternal glory. Therefore we have childlike confidence in Thee, that Thou wilt provide, govern, sanctify, protect and preserve us, Thy subjects, in body and soul, until Thou wilt transplant us from Thy kingdom of grace to the Kingdom of Thy glory."

II. God Can Hear Us.

1. For He has power over all things. Therefore nothing is impossible to Him, and He can do all things that conduce to our welfare in body and soul, and no one can prevent Him from helping us when He has determined so to do. 2 Chron. 20: 6, Rom. 10: 12.

2. Thine is the power, that is: "Heavenly Father, we acknowledge, honor and implore Thine endless power and might; thou canst do beyond all that we pray and understand; Thou canst control all things, and canst give us all good, and Thou only needst to speak a word, for when Thou speakest, it is done, when Thou commandest, it stands fast. Therefore we trust Thee that Thou wilt not deny us what serves Thine honor and our salvation."

III. God Will Hear Us.

1. For it redounds to His honor and glory that He manifest His grace and power in His kingdom and

among His members by answering prayer. He will hear that not we, but His holy name may be praised. For He is true and has promised His own that He will answer prayer. Ps. 115 : 1 ; 79 : 9, Isa. 37 : 20, John 14 : 13.

2. Thine is the glory, that is: "Heavenly Father, thou art the endlessly glorious, majestic and praise-worthy God, and, therefore, alone worthy and deserving to be worshipped, praised and adored by us with deepest reverence. All that we pray for and desire, we desire alone to the praise of Thy glory. When Thou givest us grace to hallow Thy name, to further Thy kingdom, to do Thy will, when Thou givest us daily bread and forgivest us our debts and deliverest us from evil, it is all for Thine honor and glory. Therefore, because it is to the honor of Thy name that our requests be granted, hear us. And because our hearts testify that in all our prayers we look to Thine honor and glory, we have the confidence that Thou wilt certainly hear us."

IV. God Always Hears Us.

1. For He is God for ever and ever.

a) The eternal God changes not, but in His faithfulness He is immutable. Ps. 146 : 10.

b) He is not limited as to time, and is ready with the answer before we ask. Isa. 65 : 24.

c) Hereafter, when that which is perfect is come, we shall no longer pray to God. But prayer will not cease in eternity. Then it will be thanksgiving and praise and adoration. Rev. 5 : 13 ; 7 : 12.

2. For ever, that is: "Heavenly Father, because Thy kingdom, power and glory will endure through unending eternity, and Thou art, therefore, also worshipped, adored and praised by us, grant what we

ask of Thee here in time, and we shall praise and adore Thee in eternity."

Question 129.

What doth the word "Amen" signify?

"AMEN" signifies that it shall truly and certainly be; for my prayer is more assuredly heard of God than I feel in my heart I desire these things of him.

I. The Word Amen.

"Amen" is a Hebrew word and means verily, certainly, so let it be, let it be done. Thus also it is used in the New Testament, and serves to confirm a declaration, in the same manner as an oath. Sometimes it is repeated for greater emphasis: Amen, amen, *i. e.*, verily, verily.

a) God Himself uses it. Heb. 6: 13, 14.

b) Christ uses it often in His discourses, *e. g.*, verily, verily, I say unto you. He Himself is also called, Rev. 3: 14, Amen, the faithful and true witness.

c) In the Old Testament it is used to express assent to the words of another and to confirm a vow. Deut. 27: 15-26, Ps. 106: 48.

d) It is used at the end of a prayer or of a blessing, a seal and expression, as it were, of faith in receiving an answer. Ps. 72: 19, Rom. 16: 24.

II. The Significance of the Word Amen for Us.

1. In answer to our prayer God indeed often gives us the assurance through the testimony of the Holy Spirit that He will immediately hear us. We are not, however, to base our prayer upon our feelings and emotions, but it must always be and remain a matter of faith, which rests upon God's promise. And, therefore, "Amen" at the close of the prayer signifies that I rest my assurance of being heard upon God, rather than upon the feelings of my heart. Isa. 65: 24, 1 John 5: 14, 15, 2 Cor. 1: 20.

Eph. 3 : 20, 21 : “ Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.”

APPENDIX.

I.

THE HISTORY OF THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM.

“Books also have their reverses and their history” (*Habent sua fata libelli*). Apart from the Bible there is no book whose history has been so checkered and yet so influential as that of the Heidelberg Catechism. Having been prepared under the direction and with the assistance of the foremost prince of the time of the Reformation, it attained the distinction of a general symbol for the whole Reformed Church. Its experience, however, was akin to that of ancient Israel (Psalm 129): “Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say, many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, yet they have not prevailed against me.” From its very beginning it encountered opposition. It was seized by bailiffs and suppressed. It was burnt. Even in its home it was supplanted through political federation and Church union. But against all this it stood as invincible as the confessors and martyrs of our Church, with whom it is justly compared. And it is continuing to maintain itself firm and invincible, its power undiminished and its glory undimmed, our fathers’ shield and our defence. Its power is the power of the Word of God, for it is born of the Word. Its glory is derived from the light of the Spirit of God, which permeates it. Often stricken, but not destroyed; reviled, and yet esteemed. So may it hold on and continue in its way.

The name "Palatinate or Heidelberg Catechism" indicates its original home. The principal territory of the ancient Electoral Palatinate, with its capital city Heidelberg on the Neckar, lay on both sides of the Middle Rhine. It also included the Upper Palatinate with its capital city Amberg and numerous enclaves. To-day these provinces belong to Bavaria (the Rhine and the Upper Palatinate), to Baden, Hesse, Alsace and Prussia. It was not one of the German provinces in which the Reformation found a welcome in its very beginning. Only in the year 1545 did the Elector Frederick II. yield to the urgent demands of his subjects, but the work of the Reformation was carried forward indifferently. The situation improved when in 1556 the Count-Palatine Otto Henry became Elector. At first he favored the Lutheran confession, but later he inclined toward the Reformed, so that he appointed Reformed theologians as professors in the University of Heidelberg and as pastors in Palatinate congregations. At his death the majority of the preachers and people were more Reformed or "Zwinglian" than Lutheran, so that, as the sequel showed, the course followed by his successor, Frederick III., did not involve a violent change, but only gave expression to what had previously been developed, and by extending it completed the Reformation of the Palatinate.

Frederick was born February 14, 1515, in the little town of Simmern on the Hunsrueck. His father was the Count-Palatine John II. of the Palatinate-Simmern, an intelligent and learned man, but a strict Catholic, who was very anxious to rear his twelve children, especially his oldest son Frederick, in his own faith. For this purpose he sent him to Bishop Eberhard of Liege, a zealous enemy of the Reformation, and afterwards to the court of the Emperor Charles V. But man proposes and God disposes. That time already

Frederick had discovered that the Bible is the only source of truth and Christ our only Savior; and after having married in 1537 Margravine Mary of Brandenburg-Bayreuth, who with all her heart believed in the Gospel, he soon identified himself openly and freely with the evangelical faith, prepared to risk everything for it. When he was to attach his signature to the Regensburg Interim (1541), with which it was proposed to suppress the Reformation, Frederick said to the Emperor: "Rather than do this, I will by God's help suffer anything; and if I am not safe in this country on account of my faith, I may be able to live at some other place with God." The care and support of a large family made him familiar with the way of the cross, but also with its blessings. His father, whom he with filial devotion had steadfastly sought to lead to the knowledge of the truth, died (1557) with the confession that his hope was fixed upon the merit of Christ alone and with fervent prayers to God, which Frederick in later years frequently recalled with a grateful heart. He now became Duke of Simmern, and at once introduced the Reformation in his province. But his work in Simmern, both as a ruler and a reformer, was only a training school for a greater work to which God had chosen him.

In the year 1559 the Elector Otto Henry of the Palatinate died at Heidelberg, and the Count-Palatine of Simmern became his successor. At that time the Palatinate of the Rhine, the so-called Lower Palatinate, was in a state of excitement and confusion; at Heidelberg in particular the two tendencies in the Church were arrayed against each other over the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. Thus the new Elector had to adjust and settle disputes in the very beginning. He did so with great wisdom and firmness. On the advice of Melancthon, a native of the Palatinate, he directed that thereafter in the admin-

istration of the Lord's Supper, St. Paul's words should be used: "The bread which we break, is the communion of the body of Christ; the cup of blessing which we bless, is the communion of the blood of Christ" (1 Cor. 10: 16). He also instituted the Reformed order of worship, removed crucifixes, images, candles, altars and baptismal fonts from the churches, where this had not been done under Otto Henry. To take the place of these he introduced communion tables and baptismal bowls, and instead of the Latin Church hymns, which had previously been in use, he introduced the singing of the Psalms in German. It must be understood that a man like Frederick would not allow himself to be dictated to in his work of reformation by his theologians. He himself was a theologian and of ripe Christian experience. At the same time he was ready to receive advice, and the men who stood nearest to him and influenced him most were the theologians Olevianus and Ursinus, both young in years, but rich in gifts, in faith, and in learning.

Casper Olevianus (*i. e.*, of Olewig, the ancestral seat of the family), Doctor of Theology, was born at Treves on the 10th of August in the year 1536. His father was a baker, a trades official, and a city councillor, a respected and wealthy citizen. In his fourteenth year young Olevianus went to France to study jurisprudence in the celebrated law-schools of Paris, Orleans and Bourges. There he attached himself to the persecuted Reformed congregations, having been already awakened at home. It was at this time that a most thrilling event occurred, which led him to give himself fully to God and to consecrate himself to His service. At Bourges a son of Frederick, who subsequently became his sovereign, was drowned before his very eyes in the Auron river. Olevianus rushed to his assistance in vain and brought his own life into imminent peril.

Out of the depth he cried unto the Lord and promised that if the Lord would preserve his life, he would devote it entirely to the service of the Divine Word. In a marvellous manner he was rescued from a watery grave. He now began to study the Bible and Calvin's works most earnestly. Then he went to Geneva, Lausanne and Zurich. In his twenty-third year he returned to his native town, full of enthusiasm for his work, and there accepted the position of Professor of the Latin language. But he did not forget his vow, and soon began to preach in his school-room to many hearers. When forbidden to preach there, he obtained the consent of the council and citizens to use the pulpit of St. James' church, and there continued his preaching. Most of the citizens were won for the Reformation, and a large evangelical church was organized, so that the Elector Frederick and Duke Wolfgang of Palatinate-Zweibruecken sent Superintendent Flinsbach to Olevianus' assistance. But his joy was of brief duration. In 1560 the archbishop of Treves invaded his city with an army of mercenaries, and cast Olevianus into prison and expelled the citizens who refused to give up their evangelical faith. While still in prison, Olevianus was called to Heidelberg by the Elector as court-preacher, and at the Elector's request he was released at the end of ten weeks. In his new position he enjoyed the fullest confidence of his sovereign.

Zacharias Ursinus (originally „Bär“, *i. e.*, Bear), Doctor of Theology, was born July 18, 1534, at Breslau, where his father was a clergyman. From his youth he was distinguished for excellent intellectual talents, a spiritual temper and great industry. In his sixteenth year he entered the University of Wittenberg, where he formed a special attachment for Melancthon, who in return opened his heart to his pupil.

In order to complete his classical education, Ursinus frequented (1557) the celebrated universities of Switzerland and France, where he became more fully acquainted with Calvin, Beza, Bullinger, and Peter Martyr, whose teaching he accepted most ardently, without separating himself from Melanchthon, the friend of Calvin. Ursinus prosecuted his studies most profoundly. In order to reach a settled conviction concerning the Reformed doctrine of predestination, he read the Bible from beginning to end, and finding this doctrine clearly and positively revealed in the Word of God, he, as well as Olevianus, adhered to it firmly as long as he lived. On his return to his home he was appointed Professor of Theology in his native town. But, as there was opposition to him on account of his Calvinism, he voluntarily resigned. When asked by his uncle whither he would now go, he cheerfully and confidently wrote: "I am content to leave my native land when it will not allow one to confess the truth, which I cannot with a good conscience renounce. Since my beloved teacher Philip (Melanchthon) is dead, I shall turn to the theologians of Zurich, whose reputation, however small it may be here, is so great in other churches that it cannot be obscured by our preachers. They are pious, learned, and distinguished men, in whose society I have resolved to spend my life. As for the rest, God will provide." In this way Ursinus was led to go to Zurich (1560), whence, upon the recommendation of Peter Martyr, he was called by Frederick III. to Heidelberg as Professor (1562). Of the certainty of his faith and of his personal salvation he speaks as follows in a private letter :

"If you mean that we cannot say with certainty that one will be saved, you are right when speaking of others ; but with regard to oneself, or one's own conscience and convictions concerning oneself, such a conception is both shocking and blas-

phemous, and subverts the very foundation of faith. Whoever has taught you such an idea, has instructed you as would a devil, even though he came from heaven. I will say even more; if you are not certain in this world that you are an heir of eternal life, you will not be one after death. From such a fate the Lord deliver you. For faith itself is that certainty which is the beginning of eternal life, which beginning every one must possess in this life who would have it hereafter. If you would remember the meaning of the word hope, that it is a certain expectation of eternal life, you would not write to me what causes my hair to stand on end. I would not accept a hundred thousand worlds and be so far away from my Lord as not to know certainly whether I am His or not."

These were Frederick's co-laborers in completing the Reformation in the Palatinate countries. The three were thoroughly grounded in Christ Jesus and labored together in rare unanimity of spirit. The greatest service they rendered not only to the Palatinate, but also to the entire Reformed Church, was the production of their catechism. The Elector found different manuals of instruction in his schools, and to unify the instruction he wanted a book whose creed was decidedly Reformed, suitable both for the common and the higher schools. This labor he committed to Olevianus and Ursinus, but he himself took an active part in it, and nothing was incorporated in it, even as to expression, of which he did not approve,* so that he

*See passage in a memorial of the elector by Koecher, *Catechetical History of the Reformed Church*, Jena 1756, p. 242.

In a defence written by himself (dated Amberg, Dec. 1, 1566), the elector declared in answer to the false report that Bullinger of Zurich had prepared the catechism for him: "The report that I have had my catechism and Directory of Worship prepared in Zurich by Bullinger and his associates, is an open and barefaced lie, and it can be demonstrated by my own handwriting that after I had received the catechism from my theologians and had examined it, I improved it in different places." See Kluckhohn, *Letters of Frederick the Pious of the Palatinate*, Munich, 1868, vol. I, p. 726.

could say of the book, "my catechism." After the two divines had prepared outlines, the catechism soon assumed the form in which we have it to this day, and when we consider the shortness of the time and the excellence of the work, it is evident that God's blessing was resting in an extraordinary manner upon the authors. In January, 1563, the Elector submitted for approval, at his own residence, the completed work to an assembly composed of all the superintendents, professors and preachers of Heidelberg, by whom the book was unanimously accepted and approved, as well as the Directory of Worship submitted to them.*

* The institution of superintendents originated in the time of Otto Henry. According to a letter of Frederick to his son-in-law, John Frederick of Saxony (dated Amberg, March 30, 1563), this gathering was not of the nature of a "special Synod," but a regular assembly. "It is not without good reason that I have called together all my superintendents, foremost Church officers (ministers) and theologians (since it is in accordance with established order that they meet once or twice a year to report to me whatever irregularities may exist anywhere in churches and schools, that the same may be corrected), who agreed upon a uniform catechism, which is adapted to the youth, as well as to the Church officers (ministers) themselves, since I have found in my electorate a great lack of uniformity and many irregularities in the catechetical work, and in many places no catechism at all." See Kluckhohn, *Letters*, vol. I, p. 390.

In the library at Weimar there is a pamphlet, printed in the year 1563, in which is found the following notice from a Lutheran source: "Palatinate Directory of Worship, adopted in January. Points discussed at Heidelberg eight days in succession. All superintendents summoned, and special lodgings provided for them. A new catechism is submitted to their inspection, in which are found a new enumeration of the Ten Commandments and the chief doctrines, arranged in a new order, as well as new explanations . . . All the superintendents of the electorate and all the ministers at the court and in the city of Heidelberg have received, adopted and subscribed to this catechism. And to further confirm the same, they partook of the Lord's Supper Sunday, January 17, with the lord consessors (members of the consistory?). On January 18 the elector summoned them to the court, and addressed them thus: 'I

The catechism was speedily printed and published under the title: "Catechism, or Instruction in Christian Doctrine, as it is conducted by the churches and schools of the Electoral Palatinate. (Then followed the Electoral coat of arms in three fields: the Palatinate lion, the Bavarian quadrangles, and the Imperial globe—because in case of necessity the Elector of the Palatinate was regent of the empire). Printed in the Electoral city of Heidelberg, by John Mayer, 1563." The edict of the Elector, prefixed to the catechism, which was evidently written by himself in the official style of that time, is as follows:

"I, Frederick, by the grace of God Count-palatine of the Rhine, Lord-high-steward and Elector of the Holy Roman Empire, Duke of Bavaria, etc., extend grace and greeting to all superintendents, ministers, preachers, church and school officers of the electorate of the Rhine Palatinate, and hereby would have you know, to wit:

"Being mindful of God's Word, and feeling bound by natural duty and kinship, I have at last undertaken to carry on my divinely entrusted office, calling and government not only for

have learned from the lord concessors that you have come to a unanimous conclusion which is highly gratifying. I desire that you should now in all faithfulness act accordingly. But I observe from the minutes submitted to me that the superintendent of Ingelheim was the only one who was not willing to attach his signature. I shall consult with him, and he will no doubt see what is reasonable.'" See Niedner's *Journal of Historical Theology*, 1846, p. 494, and my *Evangelical-Reformed church paper*, 1868, p. 150.

According to this record, the discussions of the assembly on the catechism and the Directory of Worship continued eight days, and on the last day, January 16, 1563, all the members, with but one exception, subscribed to it. On Sunday, January 17, they all partook of the communion with the congregation, at which perhaps for the first time the bread was broken; and on January 18 the elector solemnly dismissed them, after expressing to them his satisfaction with the result of their deliberations, and exhorting them to devote themselves zealously to the introduction of the catechism. The elector's order for the introduction of the catechism is, therefore, dated "Tuesday, January 19th."

preserving peace and quiet, and maintaining a pure, sincere and virtuous life and conduct among my subjects, but also and particularly for instructing them in and bringing them to the true knowledge and fear of the Almighty and His saving Word as the only foundation of all virtue and obedience, and for advancing with all diligence from a pure heart their eternal and temporal interests, and as far as it is in my power to help maintain them in the same.

“And as I learned in the very beginning of my administration, although my dear cousins and forefathers, the Count-palatines, Electors, etc.,* of noble and blessed memory, had instituted and undertaken different Christian and useful ordinances and regulations for the furtherance of God’s honour and the maintenance of civil discipline and order ;

“That they were not carried out as earnestly as they ought to have been, and that they did not yield the fruit that was hoped for and desired, this induced me not only to renew the same, but also, wherever necessity required it, to improve them and exemplify them, and to make further provisions. I also found no little deficiency in this respect, that the promising young people everywhere, both in the schools and the churches of my electorate, were carelessly instructed in Christian doctrine, and in places not at all, everywhere unequally and nowhere in a binding, authoritative and uniform catechism, but according to each one’s own ideas and plans. From this state of things, besides other grave and numerous evils, it came to pass that they were often brought up without the fear of God and the knowledge of His Word, and without being uniformly instructed, or else they were burdened with irrelevant and unnecessary questions, sometimes even with false doctrine.

“Now if both Christian and secular offices, power and households cannot be maintained, and order, respectability and all estimable virtues cannot be developed and promoted in subjects without first and foremost instructing and training the youth in the pure and uniform doctrine of the holy Gospel and the true knowledge of God and continually exercising them therein ;

“I have deemed it of the highest necessity and as the chief duty of my administration to institute proper regulations, to

* Frederick II. and Otto Henry.

correct the lack of uniformity and other abuses, and to bring about necessary reforms.

“To this end, with the advice and consent of my whole theological faculty, and all the superintendents and most prominent ministers, I have ordered a summary of instruction, or Catechism of our Christian Religion, to be compiled from the Word of God, both in the German and Latin languages. In this way hereafter not only the youth in the churches and the schools will be piously instructed in these Christian doctrines, but also preachers and teachers themselves will have a certain and authoritative form and rule according to which they may instruct the youth, without continually making changes according to their own fancy or introducing new doctrines.

“I, herewith, earnestly and graciously admonish and command each and all of you thankfully to accept this catechism or book of instruction to the honour of God, and to the profit and advantage of my subjects and your own souls, and to use it diligently according to its true sense for the instruction of the youth in the schools and churches, and of the people from the pulpit,—to teach, to act and to live according to the same. And I firmly hope and trust that when the youth are thus earnestly instructed and trained in the Word of God, God may grant reformation in life, temporal and eternal prosperity. That this be done as suggested, we look with confidence to you.

“Issued at Heidelberg, Tuesday, January 19, in the year fifteen hundred and sixty-three after the birth of Christ, our dear Lord and Savior.”

The Palatinate Directory of Worship, also issued in 1563, contains the following statement :

“In our Christian religion the term ‘Catechism’ means brief and simple oral instruction concerning the chief points of Christian doctrine, in which the young and unlearned are required to repeat what they have learned. It has been the custom of pious parents since the beginning of the Christian Church to have their children instructed in the fear of the Lord at home, in the school, and at church, doubtless for the following reasons, which certainly ought to induce us to do the same. In the first place they wisely concluded that the natural depravity of man would gain the ascendancy, and would

corrupt both Church and state, unless counteracted in time by wholesome instruction. In the second place they were prompted by God's express command, Exod. 12 : 13, Deuteronomy, chapters 4, 6 and 11, in which God says (Deut. 6 : 6, 7) : "These words (the Ten Commandments), which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart : And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." In the next place, as the children of the Israelites, who had been circumcised, were instructed when they came to years of discretion concerning the significance of the rite and in the covenant of God, so our children who have been baptized are to be instructed in true Christian faith and repentance, that they may confess their faith in the presence of the entire Christian congregation before they are admitted to the table of the Lord."

In the first editions of the catechism the questions were not numbered and divided into Lord's Days, and the Scripture proofs in the margin were cited only by chapter. In subsequent editions an appendix was added containing the following : 1) A "Table of Family Duties," with the heading, "Scripture passages, from which every one may learn the duties appropriate to his station in life;" 2) Morning, evening and table prayers; 3) Prayers for the Lord's Day and forms for baptism, the Lord's Supper and marriage, taken from the Directory of Worship; 4) The "Questions which were to be asked the youth when for the first time they presented themselves at the Lord's Table," viz.; questions 60, 21, 65-69, 71, 75-79, 81, 82. Concerning the Scripture passages, which were afterwards printed underneath the text of the questions, it was said in a prefatory note : "The Scripture proofs by which the faith of the children is confirmed, are such only as have been selected with great pains from the divinely inspired Scriptures (usually called canonical books) and have been added to each question and answer." In the first editions one of the proofs from the Apoc-

rypha had crept in (Sir. 3: 27, under Question 105), which soon disappeared."

Question 80, concerning the Roman mass, has a history of its own. It can be proved that three editions of the catechism appeared in the first year of its publication* (1563). In the first the question did not appear. In the second, which soon followed, the question occupies its present place, closing with the following statement: "So the mass at bottom is nothing else than an idolatrous denial of the one sacrifice and sufferings of Jesus Christ." The statement immediately follows the words, "offered by the priests." The following note appears on the last page of the book: "To the Christian reader. Omissions in the first edition—see especially folio 55 (the place where the new question appears)—are now supplied at the command of his grace, the elector.† 1563." In the third edition the closing statement of the question received its present form (after the words, "offered by the priests"), "and further, that Christ is bodily under the form of bread and wine, and, therefore, is to be worshiped in them; so that the mass at bottom is nothing else than a denial of the one sacrifice and sufferings of Jesus

* Wolters, *The Heidelberg Catechism in its original form*, Bonn, 1864, contains an exact reprint of the first edition, of which only a single copy is extant.

† In a letter to Calvin, Olevianus says, "I send you, most worthy father, a copy of the Latin edition of the catechism. In the first German edition, a copy of which was sent to Schrimger (no doubt a native of the Palatinate, who was sojourning in Geneva), the question concerning the difference between the Lord's Supper and the Popish mass was omitted. At my suggestion the Prince directed that in the second German and the first Latin editions it should be inserted (*Admonitus a me princeps voluit... addi*). I trust it may be of service to our German people."

The letter is dated April 3, 1563, and appears in Baum's edition of Calvin's works, Cunitz and Reus, Brunswick, 1878, vol. 19, p. 683.

Christ, and an accursed idolatry.” In this form Question 80 was incorporated in the Palatinate Directory of Worship, and is a part of the catechism as a confession of faith. The elector was no doubt incited to such sharp polemics by the decisions and anathemas of the Romish Council of Trent, which in the meantime had been published and brought to his notice.

At the same time that the second German edition was published, a Latin translation of the catechism appeared, prepared by the minister Joshua Lagus and the schoolmaster Lambert Pithopoeus for the use of the higher schools and gymnasia. It was used also for a long time as a compendium in connection with the lectures on dogmatics in the Reformed universities. Ursinus himself gave a series of lectures on it in the Latin language, out of which grew his larger catechetical work, “*Explicationes catecheticae*,” explanations of the catechism.*

In the Lower Palatinate (of the Rhine) the new book of instruction was everywhere received with joy. In the Upper Palatinate, however, notwithstanding the fact that the book was printed several times at Amberg, its introduction was stubbornly resisted at the instigation of the Lutheran ministers, who were supported in this matter by the governor, the crown-prince Louis. The elector was not willing to coerce them, and in person, as well as through his best ministers, sought repeatedly, though in vain, to win over the people of Amberg. It was the same Upper Palatinate, which only a generation later allowed itself to be turned by the Jesuits to Catholicism.

No sooner was the Heidelberg Catechism published, than it was fiercely assailed by Frederick's Lutheran

* This work appeared for the first time in the collected writings of Ursinus in 1584, which were published by Quirinus Reuter. In 1598 a special edition was issued by Pareus, which was enlarged from manuscripts left by Ursinus.

fellow-princes, who were his neighbors and in other respects his closest friends, Duke Wolfgang of Zweibruecken, Duke Christopher of Wurtemberg and Margrave Charles of Baden. His own son-in-law, Duke John Frederick, the intermediate, of Saxony, often attacked it in a most unbecoming manner; so also the most celebrated Lutheran theologians in the empire. Against the former the elector himself led the defence, the latter he handed over to Ursinus, after he had had Bullinger, of Zurich, to prepare for him a written defence against them. This suggested to his adversaries the suspicion that the latter was also the author of the catechism.

Frederick sent the following reply, dated Sept. 14, 1563, to the princes who opposed him:

“My beloved, believe me in all kindness that I do not doubt that your remonstrance against the catechism was prompted by good and friendly motives and the best of intentions. In this sense it is understood and received. And you may be assured, my beloved, that I am heartily thankful to everyone, even the least, from whom I learn anything out of God’s Word that would improve my sinful life and increase my knowledge of God’s Word, and that might at the same time promote my own salvation and that of my subjects, which I have more at heart than even their temporal prosperity. I clearly recognize that all of us, as long as we live, are not lords, but only disciples in the school of Christ; also that we are human and liable to err, and, therefore, stand in constant need of instruction and edification. On the other hand I have at the same time learned so much, both from the divine Word and through long experience (God Almighty having awakened me since my entrance upon my electoral reign by numerous adversities, as well as by restless spirits, selfish and ambitious theologians, all of which nevertheless have proved to be fatherly visitations, and have been for my good), not to allow myself to be carried away by every wind of heretical doctrine, nor to be diverted from the truth which I have accepted and confessed, but my immovable foundation and firm ground has always been, and still remains upon this: ‘This is my beloved Son:

hear Him.' To this as a pure and infallible standard I would cheerfully conform my whole life and the government entrusted to me by the grace of God; in this I would persevere, at the same time avoiding and removing everything possible that is contrary to it, and yet fulfilling my duties as they meet me.... And likewise it has frequently happened since the beginning of the world, and even to the present time, that those who have been Christlike in character and earnest in the discharge of the duties of religion, and have openly confessed the same, have been slandered and persecuted more than others. And I am not the first one that has fallen into such evil repute, for many others have suffered, more recent examples of which may readily be recalled, and yet the truth has always stood firm.... And my catechism is not based upon the doctrines of men, but only and alone upon the Word of God, as is clearly proved by the marginal references to Scripture. And since the Scriptural foundations upon which my catechism is built remain firm and unshaken, I cannot see that such a catechism contains false or pernicious doctrine, on account of which it should be condemned, unless one is prepared at the same time to reject and condemn the Word of God itself."*

Frederick was visited at Heidelberg by different friendly princes, who sought to induce him to withdraw his catechism, and to recede from the changes which he had introduced into the churches. Against all these influences he stood immovable. The dukes Wolfgang and Christopher sent an embassy to him proposing a conference, a colloquy, with their theologians. They reported the following answer of the elector to their sovereigns:

"In answer to the proposal of a colloquy I would say that it is known and manifest to all what such colloquies have accomplished among our own people, as well as among our opponents. Your grace, the elector, would not be averse to discussing these matters familiarly and fraternally with his dear friends and cousins (the princes), but he will have nothing to do with the restless theologians."†

* Kluckhohn, Letters, vol. I., p. 439. † The same, vol. I., p. 466.

His son-in-law, Duke John Frederick of Saxony, opposed the elector most vehemently. To him he wrote, March 30, 1563 :

“ You have been unnecessarily anxious, as if I were in danger of being deceived by the devil’s instruments ; but thank God, I have attained to such an age, and to such knowledge and understanding of the divine Word that I am not moved about by every wind of doctrine. I would also most heartily wish that all others, setting aside their own feelings and the views of men, might be governed and led by God’s Word alone. In other respects I acknowledge before God, as is proper, that I am a poor sinner, and I pray daily for the forgiveness of my sins, and that by the power of the Holy Ghost I may grow more and more in the knowledge of His dear Son, my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.”*

In a letter dated August 21, 1563, Frederick thanks his son-in-law for different writings he had received, saying that he accepted them as having been sent in a christian, friendly spirit and with good intentions.

“ I would, therefore, thank my beloved, and I hope to God that I have not given you any occasion for assaulting me, nor would I willingly do it now. But I know better than that I am in the grasp of the devil, and that you need to devote yourself to my rescue. For I belong in body and soul, both in life and death, to my dear and faithful Savior, Jesus Christ, and it has cost Him too much to make me His own, to deliver me to the power of the devil, seeing that I have been purchased by His own precious blood. I also assuredly know and believe that the devil, with all his arts and cunning, cannot injure me nor rob me of a single hair on my head without the will of my heavenly Father.† But I hope to God that my beloved understands the truth better than appears from his conduct toward me. Should, however, my hope be vain, I shall the more diligently pray to my dear and faithful God, and shall not doubt that by the aid of His good and Holy Spirit His omnipotence may yet open the eyes of your understanding, so that you may come to a right knowledge of the truth.”††

* Kluckhohn, Letters, vol. I., p. 391.

† See Question 1 of the catechism.

†† Kluckhohn, Letters, vol. I., p. 440.

Frederick endured the invectives of the young man, his son-in-law, with the greatest patience and meekness. When he, however, became so base, after having alienated the affections of his wife from her father, that he sought by correspondence to incite the Electress Mary against her husband on account of the catechism, bringing upon her an attack of sickness, Frederick addressed him in a different tone. In a letter written July 7, 1563, he said :

“I desire that you, my beloved, cease from troubling and grieving and seeking to reform my affectionate and dearly beloved wife. I have given you my daughter for your wife. With her you have the right and power to undertake a work of reformation. I have given her to you and instructed her when she took her departure from me that she should render to you the Christian obedience due you. If she does not do it, you must speak to her about it. But you, my beloved, must not interfere with my wife nor my children (with the exception of your wife).”*

The severest opposition to the elector and his catechism was yet to come. The emperor, Maximilian II., issued a call for a Diet at Augsburg in 1566, at which war against the Turks was to be discussed. Thereupon several Lutheran princes, incited by their theologians, agreed, on account of his “innovation,” to bring charges against the elector before the emperor and the Diet, accusing him of departure from the Augsburg Confession, and that he should, therefore, be excluded from the Religious Peace. It was rumored that it might even cost him his electorate, if not his life. With brotherly anxiety he was warned in two letters by his brother, Count-palatine Richard of Simmern, not to go to Augsburg. Among other things he said to his dearly-beloved brother :

“I find consolation in the hope that the Almighty power of my dear and faithful Heavenly Father will use me as an instru-

* Kluckhohn, Letters, vol. I., p. 416.

ment for the confession of His name in these latter days in the holy empire of the German nation,* not only by word of mouth, but also by act, as was done some time ago by my dear brother-in-law, Duke John Frederick of Saxony, elector of blessed memory.† And although I do not have the presumption to compare myself with the said elector of blessed memory, I know on the other hand that the same God who kept him in the true knowledge of the holy Gospel is still living, and is well able to preserve me, a poor, simple man, and, by the power of the Holy Ghost, will certainly do it, even if it should come to this that blood must be spilt. And should it please my God and Father in heaven thus to honor me, I should never be able to thank Him sufficiently for it, either in time or in eternity."

In this heroic faith Frederick went to Augsburg. There his princely opponents were stirred up by their theologians, while the Bishops of Worms and Speyer and the papal nuncio sought to influence the emperor. Frederick stood alone, but the Lord was with him. Upon the accusation of Duke Wolfgang of Zweibruecken and Christopher of Wurtemberg, his "good friends and true neighbors," the emperor ordered him to appear before the assembly, May 14, demanding of him that he set aside all the changes he had introduced into the churches, as well as the catechism, in order to prevent his being proceeded against with the utmost severity. Frederick retired from the assembly in order to prepare a defence, but soon appeared again followed by his son, John Casimir, who as his "spiritual armour-bearer" carried after him the Bible. Not long after the Diet he wrote out the entire proceedings and his own defence, in which, among other things, he said :

* It is worthy of note that here Frederick does not designate the empire by the official title of the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation.

† The elector having been conquered and taken prisoner in the Smalcald war at the battle of Mühlberg, 1547, by the emperor Charles V., was declared to have forfeited his land, and was held as a prisoner for five years after he had first been sentenced to death.

“With reference to matters of religion which I am called upon to change and to set aside, I announce that in the sphere of faith and conscience I know but one Lord, who is the Lord of lords and King of kings; and, therefore, I say that this question does not pertain to ‘a cap full of flesh’ (*i. e.*, his head), but to the soul and its salvation, which has been committed to me by my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and which I am in duty bound and prepared to preserve for Him. Therefore I cannot concede to your Imperial Majesty the right of authority over it, a right which belongs to God alone, who is its creator. As far as my catechism is concerned, I am committed to it. It is fortified in the margin by proof-texts from the holy Scriptures to such an extent that it must stand immovable, and it is my hope that by the help of God it may continue so to stand. As for the rest, I comfort myself with the thought that my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has given me, together with all who believe on Him, the assured promise that everything which I shall lose for the sake of His honor or name, shall be restored to me in the world beyond a hundred-fold. With this I most humbly commend myself to the grace of your Imperial Majesty.”

During his address all eyes were turned upon the elector. According to an old tradition, when he had finished his speech, the Elector Augustus of Saxony approached him, and putting his hand upon his shoulder, said to him: “Frederick, thou art more pious than all of us.” So also at the close of the session the Margrave Charles of Baden said to those standing around him, “Why do you persecute this prince? He has more piety than the whole of us!” And history has given Frederick the surname of “the Pious.” The emperor, however, was not at all satisfied with Frederick’s defence. He afterwards stated in the presence of the princes, “this pest must be destroyed.” Boquinus rightly said of the elector at a later date in his Latin funeral oration: “If martyrdom consists in the righteousness of the cause, the temper of soul with which it is endured, and joyous resignation to suffering, then we may count this splendid elector among the martyrs of Christ.”

Frederick left the Diet before it closed. He arrived at Heidelberg on Friday before Whitsunday, and the people received him with the greater joy, because it had been rumored that he had been deposed at Augsburg, yea even beheaded. On the following day he attended preparatory service in the church of the Holy Ghost, and in the presence of all the people extended his right hand to his court-preacher, Olevianus, exhorting him to remain steadfast. On Sunday he and his family publicly partook of the Lord's Supper with the congregation.

Frederick III. was a prince by the grace of God, like whom there were but few, of eminent good sense, firm faith, dispassionate judgment, sincere piety, beloved by his people, and of blessed memory to this day. After God had preserved him many years to be a blessing to men, the hour approached for which he had been preparing himself all his lifetime. Earlier in life he suffered from gout, in his later years he was afflicted with dropsy and suffered much pain. But the "only comfort," which sustained him earlier in conflict, now also supported him in suffering—"in life and death." On his deathbed he said to those standing around him :

"I have lived long enough, both for you and the Church. Now I shall be called to a better life. I have done for the Church the best I possibly could, but have not accomplished a great deal. God who can do all things and who cared for His servants before my day, still lives and reigns in heaven. He will not leave you orphans, nor will He leave without fruit the prayers and tears which I have brought to Him on my knees in this room for my successors and for the Church."

Then he said to his court-preacher, Olevianus : "The Lord may call me whenever it pleases Him. I have a clear conscience in Christ Jesus my Lord, whom I have served with all my heart, and I have lived to see that in my churches and schools the people are directed

away from men to Him alone." He also said: "I have been detained long enough by the prayers of pious Christians. It is time that my earthly life should close, and that I should go to my Savior into heavenly rest." After he had directed that Psalm 31 and John 17 should be read to him, and he himself had prayed aloud, he gently fell asleep, assured of his salvation, at the age of 61 years, on October 26, 1576. Upon his tombstone was inscribed his motto: "Lord, as Thou wilt." In his will also, which was published* by John Casimir in 1577, Frederick made express mention of his catechism in the following words:

"I especially acknowledge allegiance to my published catechism and Directory of Worship, in which all the chief points of the Christian faith are explicitly and clearly set forth in order, and many of them explained in detail."

As decisively as Frederick III. was devoted to the Reformed confession, his eldest son and successor, Louis VI., held to Lutheranism. But he lacked very much of having his father's spirit. As soon as he had come to Heidelberg from Amberg, where he had resided as governor of the Upper Palatinate, while his father's body yet remained unburied, he asserted himself most harshly by not allowing his father's faithful ministers to speak a word at the funeral, insisting that the Lutheran court-preachers, whom he had brought with him, should officiate. Anxious apprehension seized the people of the Palatinate, of whose very flesh and blood Reformed doctrine and practice had become a part. Petitions and representations of every kind, even those of his brother, John Casimir, as well as the entreaties and admonitions which his father had given to his successor in his last will were of no avail with the new elector. He suppressed the Heidelberg Catechism,

* Struve, Palatinate Church History, Frankfort on the Main, 1721, p. 275, etc.

drove out six hundred Reformed ministers and schoolmasters, whom the Swiss received most kindly, and introduced Lutheranism into the entire Palatinate. Under such circumstances Count-Palatine John Casimir could no longer remain in Heidelberg. He removed to Neustadt on the Haardt, having received Neustadt, Kaiserslautern and Boeckelheim (with Frankenthal) as an inheritance from his father. In this territory, through his influence, the Heidelberg Catechism was retained. The title under which the book was now printed was, "Catechism, or Instruction in Christian Doctrine, as Conducted in the Churches and Schools of the Former Electoral, now Princely Palatinate."

Louis was especially bitter against both of his father's spiritual advisers, Olevianus and Ursinus, and they were made to suffer his utmost displeasure.

After his dismissal Ursinus was appointed a professor in the new Reformed university which had been established at Neustadt on the Haardt as a substitute for the University of Heidelberg. Just as he had stood by the father in the defence of the catechism, so now he served the son. Several of his admirable defences were published with the catechism after 1592. These were: 1) "Reply to the criticisms of several theologians in reference to the marginal Scripture proofs of the Heidelberg Catechism. 1564." 2) "Answer and 'counter-questions' to six questions concerning the Lord's Supper. 1564." 3) "Articles in which the evangelical churches agree or differ in relation to the Lord's Supper. 1566." 4) "Vindication of the catechism of Christian doctrine, published at Heidelberg in the year 1563, against the unfounded charges and misrepresentations with which it has been assailed by different persons. In addition, Dr. Martin Luther's interpretation of the breaking of the bread in the

Lord's Supper. 1564." In this treatise there are printed on the face and on the back of the title-page two passages from Tertullian as a motto: "None but a wicked heart is offended at the good;" and, "Neither time, nor human authority, nor custom, nor anything else can deprive truth of its right." The conclusion of the preface is as follows:

"For ourselves we find sufficient comfort first and foremost in our own consciences which appeal with joy and confidence from the accusations of our opponents to the just tribunal of Christ; in the next place, in the words of our Lord Jesus Himself when He says to His disciples, and to the entire Church, both to warn and to comfort them: "Blessed are ye, when men shall hate, revile, and reproach you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and persecute you, cast out your names as evil, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you. (Matt. 5: 11; Luke 6: 22) Since we find that such unjust and grievous complaining on the part of these troublesome people works great injury to the divine Word and to the churches of this section which we are called upon to serve by God's help and assistance, and grieves many pious and God-fearing christians, and disturbs many weak consciences, for these just and sufficient reasons we have felt constrained to prepare a Scriptural vindication of the catechism and Christian doctrine of these churches. Finally, we ask the Christian reader that each one, in the light of his own duty and for his own advantage, seek the truth with an impartial mind and avoid falsehood. And since we desire and wish nothing more than that our writings and those of our opponents be thoroughly examined in comparison with each other and with the Word of God with all diligence, and with a sole design to know the truth; although our opponents make use of every effort and means with the authorities and with the people to have our writings torn from the hands of the people, to have them removed out of sight, and to prohibit their sale in city and country; every sensible man, therefore, may readily see which party is less afraid and anxious about its cause and whose fault it is that Christian unity cannot be brought about through

a knowledge of the truth. For if our opponents were as willing and ready as we are to search for and accept the truth by means of an amicable and impartial colloquy, we do not doubt that all dispute and dissension would soon be silenced and the Church would attain to blessed rest and peace. And we earnestly pray the eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that by His Spirit of truth and peace He would move and incline all Christian hearts in this direction, for the sake of His dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen."

To the vindication of the doctrine of the catechism, which had been assailed, there is added a "conclusion in the form of an apology to Christian and peaceful people, who might think that in parts the vindication was perhaps unnecessary or too vehement." Following this the words of the Church father Augustine are quoted (Epist. 7): "That love for oneself is wicked which desires that others might be in error, in order that one's own error might be concealed."

These treatises, written with much ingenuity and ability, are rather of an apologetical than of a polemical character. Their chief aim is to prepare the people for the attacks of opponents and to establish them in the truth they had accepted.

Ursinus was not permitted to labor long in Neustadt. His vigor was exhausted by his excessive labors at Heidelberg, where he was not only professor, and the preparation of many writings fell to his lot, but also president of the "Sapienz-College," a theological seminary, whose only professor he was for a time, and whose economic management also depended upon him, on account of which he sometimes spoke of it in letters as his "tread-mill."* He was not of a

* Over the door of his study he had placed the following inscription :

"Amice, quisquis huc venis,
Aut agito paucis, aut abi,
Aut me laborantem juva."

("Friend, whoever thou art that enterest here, be brief, or go, or help me in my work.")

contentious disposition, but sincerely loved and sought peace ; at the same time he would not evade a conflict for the truth when forced upon him, however deeply it might wound his heart. He wrote to Bullinger : " From this conflict I carry a wound which I do not expect to be healed of in this life." He died May 6, 1583, only 48 years of age, and was buried in the choir of the parish church at Neustadt. His epitaph speaks of him as " a great theologian, victorious over heresies concerning the person of Christ and the Lord's Supper, endowed with great power as a speaker and a writer, a keen philosopher, a wise man, and an earnest teacher of youth."

Olevianus, after his dismissal from office at Heidelberg, was called by Count Louis of Wittgenstein, lord-high-steward and friend of Frederick III., to Berleburg, and here again he took an active part in the development of the Church. In the year 1584 he went to Herborn, where a Reformed university soon flourished under his direction. The General Synod, over which he presided (1586), adopted the presbyterial and synodical form of government for the districts of Nassau, Wittgenstein, Solms and Wied. The following year he was overtaken by a critical illness, and calmly looked forward to his end. In his last will and testament he says after the introductory words :

" In the first place, I thank my dear God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, that He created me a rational creature in this world ; then in particular, that He efficaciously called me and bestowed upon me the gift of faith, that He quickened me in our only Mediator and Savior Jesus Christ, when I was dead in sin, and bestowed upon me in Him the righteousness of God through the holy sacrifice of my Savior Jesus Christ, as well as the hope of glory, and that He has revealed unto me the riches of His grace, viz., that He predestinated me by grace to sonship in Christ, whence all these blessings flow, and that He has made me a partaker of the same through the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry " Abba, Father."

The subscription, written in his own hand, is as follows: "I, Caspar Olevianus, declare by my own signature and openly testify before the Holy Trinity that, by the help of God's Spirit and grace, I have taught, both in word and writing, the pure Christian faith, and that I, being sealed by the Holy Ghost, persevere in the same faith and doctrine by God's grace unto eternal salvation, relying upon the grace which He has revealed unto me in His Word. Amen, through Jesus Christ." On his deathbed he said: "I have only learned to know in this sickness what sin is, and how great is the majesty of God, and that it is not sufficient for men only to desire companionship with God." Then he spoke of a vision he had: "Yesterday I was filled for more than an hour with unspeakable joy. It appeared to me that I was walking in a meadow resplendent with light, and while I was moving about, heavenly dew fell upon me, not in drops but in streams. Both my body and soul were filled with exceeding great joy." His friend, John Piscator, said to him: "So the good Shepherd has led you into His green pastures?" "Yes," he answered, "he has led me to the fountain of living water." He asked that Psalm 42 and Isaiah 53 and other chapters of the Word of God be read to him, and then exclaimed: "I would no longer postpone my journey to the Lord, I desire to depart and be with Christ." He asked his friends, who were standing at his bedside, to sing the hymn, "Nun bitten wir den Heiligen Geist" ("Now pray we the Holy Ghost"), he himself joining in the singing with a weak voice. Then he bade farewell to his aged mother and his friends, shaking hands with them and blessing them. When at the point of death, his colleague, Alsted, approached him and said: "Dear brother, you are undoubtedly certain of your salvation in Christ, even as you have taught others?" the dying

man laid his hand upon his heart and said : “ *Certissimus!*” *i. e.*, “ most certain !” This was Olevianus’ last word. He died March 15, 1587.

Thus the three authors of the Heidelberg Catechism lived and labored, thus they died, and both in their life and in their death they verified what they had professed.

The reign of Elector Louis VI. was of short duration. He died in 1583. The work of reformation which he had carried on by force experienced the truth expressed by one of his mottoes : “ Everything passes away.” John Casimir, who administered the government for his nephew, still under age, subsequently Elector Frederick IV., restored not only the old Directory of Worship, but also the Heidelberg Catechism in the entire Lower Palatinate, where under the reigns of Frederick IV. and Frederick V. it was again earnestly taught and brought with it a rich blessing. Scarcely had the catechism been adopted by the Synod of Dort (1619) as a confession of the entire Reformed Church* when it encountered a period full of vicissitudes through the Thirty Years’ War. When Frederick V., after the unfortunate battle at the White Mountain near Prague, had lost his dominions and had fled to Holland, the Palatinate was invaded by Spanish and Bavarian troops. With them came monks of every order, who undertook

* The resolution was as follows : “ It is unanimously declared with the heartiest approval of the foreign as well as of the Netherland theologians that the doctrine embraced in the Palatinate Catechism is in accordance with the Word of God, and that it contains nothing which on the ground of dissonance with the Word of God needs to be altered or amended, and that it is also an exceedingly correct hand book of sound Christian doctrine adapted with special skill, not only to the capacity of youth, but also to adults, that, therefore, it may hereafter be taught with much profit in the Netherland churches, and it must, by all means, be retained (adopted at the 147th and 148th sessions, May 1, 1619).

the work of proselyting. First of all, the Heidelberg Catechism was forced out and as many copies as possible were destroyed. There are still some copies of that day extant, which bear the title, "Catechism, or Instruction in Christian Doctrine, as it is conducted in the churches and schools of the Electoral Palatinate." As a result of the victories of Gustavus Adolphus it was again brought into general use for a time; but after the battle of Nordlingen (1634) it lost its place in the Palatinate throughout the continuance of the war. Not until the Peace of Westphalia (1648), when Charles Louis, the son of Frederick V. returned to his paternal inheritance, was the Heidelberg Catechism brought back from its banishment and used again to lead the generation demoralized by war in the way of salvation and of piety.

With the year 1685 a new period of conflict began, when, after the death of Charles, the last of the electors of the Reformed line of Simmern, the Neuburger family began to reign, with the late proselyte to Catholicism, Philip William, at its head. The Jesuits whom he brought with him attacked the catechism fiercely, especially on account of the eightieth question. The catechism found an able defender in Lenfant, the court-preacher of the Elector's widow. ("The innocence of the Heidelberg Catechism." 1688.) His life being in danger on account of the Jesuits, he was compelled to flee to Berlin, where he again received an appointment to preach. The opposition was carried to the point of suppressing the catechism under the next Elector, John William, and during the French War of Reunion. It was taken away from the children of mixed marriages, and the children themselves were compelled to attend Catholic schools. Oppression and abuse were invoked to cause adults to apostatize from their faith. The "only comfort" was the support of many from whom had been taken both house and home, of many

who were cast into prison and allowed to suffer there from cold. They were either to make a declaration that they had become Catholics of their own accord, or be left to perish in prison. When it was discovered that the prisoners strengthened themselves for resistance through the books they had brought with them (the Psalms and the catechism), these were taken away from them. But they were not dependent upon the outward letter. They remained true to their faith; and although one and another had become weak, such recovered themselves with deep penitence. What the bailiff of Germersheim said, in anger on account of this fact, was true: "These Reformed are just like the willows by the brooks: though cut and stunted, they sprout again." True, indeed! So said the prophet Jeremiah (17: 7, 8): "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit."

The opposition which had hitherto been waged against the catechism reached its climax under the reign of the Elector Charles Philip, when an attempt was made to suppress it altogether. In a proclamation "issued at Heidelberg, April 24, 1719," he commanded the catechism to be "suppressed" in the following manner. The officers were to "seize without exception within the space of three months all the copies containing the eightieth question and some other objectionable points." The reason given for this command was that this question was offensive to the Catholics, and that besides, the title-page of the book bore the electoral escutcheon, with the words, "by order of his serene Electoral Highness," and "with the permission

of his Electoral Highness." This was "audacious, offensive and criminal." The catechism was not only removed from the schools, but was also taken away from the families. Therefore the bailiff of the place went from house to house to collect the copies. Another proclamation directed that the citizens in whose possession such books would thereafter be found must "pay to his gracious majesty a fine of ten florins for each copy." The collected copies were to be delivered to the magistrates. The officers everywhere complied, with the exception of the burgomaster and council of the city of Odernheim, who had to be compelled to carry out the order. That the Elector's purpose was not only to prohibit its use in his own country, but, if possible, to destroy the catechism itself, is shown further by the circumstance that even the bookbinders were ordered under the threat of punishment to secure again and to hand over such copies as they had already sent to other countries. The copies that had been collected were burnt. The Catholic pulpits found pleasure in whipping the catechism with rods in the presence of the devout worshipers. The Reformed Church Council at Heidelberg, which had also been commanded to withdraw the catechism, remonstrated against this. They cited the fact that the objectionable words had always been on the title-page, and that they had hitherto been printed on it in every new edition. Besides, the last edition had been issued by a Catholic printer without consultation with the consistory. In relation to the introduction and use of the catechism, they showed that it had been issued by the Elector Frederick III. himself in 1563 and triumphantly defended at Augsburg in 1566, acknowledged at Dort in 1619 by all the Reformed churches as a confession of faith, and had been in use ever since for more than 150 years without being prohibited. Assur-

ances were also given that Question 80 referred only to the doctrine, without in the least condemning the persons themselves. In conclusion the Consistory referred to its obligations, in virtue of which it was bound to maintain the confessional position of the Church.

In answer to this memorial, the members of the Consistory were verbally informed that the command would have to stand, and that unconditional obedience to it would be expected. Besides this violent action, the elector committed another offence by taking away from the Reformed the Church of the Holy Ghost and giving it to the Catholics. The Consistory discharged its duty in remonstrating again and again, but were always put off. As the Reformed did not wish to leave any lawful means untried, they sent a complaint to the Protestant States of the empire (*Corpus Evangelicorum*). The Reformed States especially espoused with energy the cause of the Palatinate brethren, and foremost among them was the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, who in a letter sought to persuade the elector to revoke his order, by calling especial attention to the fact that the confession adopted at Trent on the part of the Catholics condemned not only the doctrines of the Lutherans and the Reformed, but their persons as well. So also the Reformed king, Frederick William I. of Prussia, sent an ambassador to urge the release of the catechism, on the ground that it was the confession of the Reformed Church in Germany, and, as such, security was given to it with all its contents. The ambassador, Lord von Hecht, was unremitting in his efforts, and with him stood the ambassadors (who had meanwhile arrived) of the Landgrave of Hesse and of the Reformed European potentates, viz., of the king of Great Britain and of the states of Holland. These now demanded most explicitly that the elector must again

allow the free use of the Reformed Heidelberg Catechism in the countries of the Palatinate, and must restore it to the subjects themselves. To meet the emergency of continual refusal, the powers threatened, since all their remonstrances and entreaties were in vain, to curtail the liberty of worship of their Catholic subjects. In spite of this intervention, the suppression of the catechism was continued amid the persistent resistance of the people and their ministers. At Odernheim one of the Reformed was cast into prison and was given only bread and water, because he would not comply with the order of the bailiff to search for copies of the catechism that were still concealed in the houses. Only the most earnest intervention of the ambassador of Great Britain succeeded in securing liberty for him. Even the pope interfered in the matter, and encouraged the elector to continue in his "praiseworthy" zeal. On the other hand, the Reformed Consistory was also encouraged and strengthened by comforting messages from abroad. The Archbishop of Canterbury wrote in the name of the Anglican Church to the Palatinate Consistory, his "greatly beloved brethren in Christ." The letter begins thus :

"We, the archbishops and bishops of the Anglican Church, greet you and the congregations entrusted to you with due friendship and love. We, as members of the same body with you, heartily lament and are as deeply touched by the hard and cruel persecutions which you suffer for righteousness' sake, as if we were called upon to suffer them in our own persons. This you must not regard as a kindness flowing from pity, but rather as the expression of a duty which we owe to you and our Savior Jesus Christ."

The assurance is then given that the king and parliament are firmly resolved to assist the Reformed people of the Palatinate. On this account England also was compelled to become a party to the guarantee of the Peace of Westphalia. The letter ends thus :

“May the chief Shepherd of our souls and the bishop of our Church grant that this righteous work which we have begun may reach a happy issue, and that through the present persecutions, which are directed not only against you, but against all Evangelical-Reformed churches, the Evangelical-Reformed princes may once be aroused and stirred up to take rightly to heart the welfare of our Church, and to agree upon measures for its protection; for our deadly enemies, the Jesuits, need nothing more at the present time than sufficient power to suppress, and, if possible, to devour us, and the sooner they can do it, the better they will like it. In this connection, what else does it behoove us Protestants to consider, than how to organize ourselves in good time for defense, and not to allow when some of us are attacked, our whole Church to be overthrown and destroyed. God Almighty grant that we may bring about among ourselves an alliance for the permanent protection of the Protestant Church, and as our Savior Jesus Christ has established it upon the eternal rock, so may He continue to strengthen and maintain it upon this immovable foundation and not permit the gates of hell to prevail against it. This ought to be the desire of us all. In this direction we must labor with united strength. To this end we will encourage one another with the words which the valiant general Joab addressed to his brother Abishai and his fellow-combatants, when they were attacked at one and the same time by the Syrians and the Ammonites (2 Sam. 10 : 12): ‘Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God, and the Lord do that which seemeth Him good.’”

The complaints against the prohibition of the catechism and the taking away of the Church of the Holy Ghost were finally also brought before the Emperor and the Imperial Diet. The violation of the law on the part of the Elector was so apparent that even the Emperor had to decide against him, however unwilling he was to do so on account of confessional interest. Although ordered to permit the free use of the book, he endeavored in the course of the negotiation to secure from the Palatinate Consistory an alteration or modifi-

cation of the language of Question 80. But the Consistory now also stood firm, and declared that it was not authorized to make changes in a symbolical book of the Church. Thus the Heidelberg Catechism emerged from this siege of persecution unaltered, and its use was continued to the blessing of young and old.

The electoral Palatinate was blotted out in the first French revolution, never to arise again. After Germany's deliverance from the French yoke, it was divided among the neighboring states. In different provinces the Palatinate Catechism remained in use, until it was displaced, like Luther's catechism, in those provinces into which the union was introduced, in 1817, a century after the abortive attempt to suppress it by force. In the Bavarian Palatinate a catechism was substituted, in which one of the first questions was this: "What is man's chief end?" "Man's chief end is to know the truth and to do good, in order that he may thereby become virtuous and happy." About the year 1850 this book was superseded by another catechism, prepared by Ebrard, and, like that prepared by Ullmann for Baden, which followed the arrangement of the Heidelberg Catechism, it was a blending of the same with the Lutheran Catechism. Both books (the Palatinate in 1869, the Bavarian in 1882) yielded to the advance of Liberalism in Church and state.

In this way the blessed old Heidelberg Catechism has been shut out from its native home for more than fifty years, but it left its impress for decades upon the hearts of the departing generation. To this I can testify.

In 1851 I was pastor, in my native Palatinate home, of the congregation at Billingham, an old electoral Palatinate town and the birthplace of Billicanus, well-known in the history of the Reformation. How could I instruct my catechumens in the above named cate-

chism? I resorted to the expedient of dictating my own manual for catechumens, which the law allowed us to do, besides using the above named book. The congregation was originally Reformed, and according to the charter of the union the symbolical books "were to be held in proper esteem," and so with a good conscience I began with the first catechetical lesson to dictate to the children out of my own manual for catechumens the "only comfort," the first question of the Heidelberg Catechism. After a few lessons, I noticed that several children discontinued writing out the questions and answers, and when I questioned them with reference to the matter, they answered: "Herr Parre, mer hawe's gedruckt; misse mer's dann noch schreiwe?" ("Dear pastor, we have it in print; must we also write it out?") As the children committed at home the dictated exercises, the old people's memory was awakened, and everything appeared familiar to them. It had scarcely become known that these lessons could be found in the "Heidelberg Catechism," when the children explored every garret and lumber-room, with the result that they brought to church old copies of the Heidelberg Catechism of all sizes and styles of binding.

In the same congregation I met the long-since suppressed catechism with a poor widow on her dying-bed; not in the lumber-room, but in the chamber of her heart. The woman indicated in her conversation that she had a knowledge of the Word of God, and when I finally pointed her to her only comfort in the language of the Heidelberg Catechism, she took the words out of my mouth, and repeated in prayer almost word for word the answer to the first question.*

* Professor Plitt (later of Bonn) had similar experiences at that time in Heidelberg. "In the congregation which had been served by one of the authors of the Heidelberg Catechism, Olevianus, the Church of the Holy Ghost at Heidelberg, I learned to know many

When in 1854 this new catechism was introduced, I had another experience of how the Heidelberg Catechism maintained itself, in an old Reformed congregation on the Rhine, at Iggelheim, where the Elector Frederick the Pious had a hunting castle, at which he frequently sojourned. There it was the custom for the children to sleep with their grandparents in a rear room reserved for the old people. I soon discovered in my pastoral visits that in the evening after retiring, the old people, before going to sleep, would recite and discuss with their grandchildren who were attending catechetical instruction questions taken from the Heidelberg Catechism. I could tell in my instruction where such evening catechization had taken place. Yes, if our old Heidelberg Catechism could relate the whole story of its life and sufferings, what great things we should hear !

old men and women whose eyes brightened when upon their sickbeds and deathbeds their attention was directed to the first question of the catechism. Most of them remembered the question from the days of their childhood. Many of them said that as children they were not able fully to understand the question, and that it was a burden to them to learn it by heart ; now, however, they thanked God that they knew it, and could use it in prayer to their comfort and strengthening. The later generation which had not been brought up on the Heidelberg Catechism had no such anchorage. The older people, to whom had been entrusted in their youth the riches of the Heidelberg Catechism, passed through all the changeful scenes of life without being disturbed in their souls. They stood upon an immovable foundation. How the attention was quickened when occasionally the outline of a sermon was taken from the Heidelberg Catechism. How the lips of the older people would move, silently joining in repeating the question, when one of the pithy questions of the catechism was cited in the sermon. The days of their youth would be revived. To hear the old familiar tones did them good. They sounded through their souls like a message from home. . . . The Heidelberg Catechism still lives. In three hundred years it has not died ; it lives in the hearts of Christians. . . . It will not die as long as the Protestant Church stands." *Theol. Studien und Kritiken*, 1863, p. 24, etc.

From the beginning the Reformed Church did not want in good catechisms. One needs only to be reminded of those of Calvin, Bullinger and a'Lasco. But none breathed so thoroughly the right spirit and met all the requirements of such a book as the Heidelberg Catechism, and for this reason it was everywhere joyfully welcomed, and reached a wide circulation. This accounts for the fact that, apart from the Bible, this book has been translated into more languages than any other, and more copies of it have been circulated than of any other book. At the same time that the second German edition appeared, a Latin edition was published (1563). Subsequently it was translated into Dutch (1566 by Dathen, and 1580 by C. van der Heyden); into Greek (1597 by Sylburg), a copy of which was sent to the patriarch of Constantinople; by order of the states of Holland into modern Greek and Spanish (1648); into Polish by Prasmovius; into Hungarian (1577) by Huszár, later by Skarasi, and then revised by Molnár); into Arabic by Chelius; into Singalese by Konijn (1741), besides into Hebrew, Low Saxon, English, Scotch, French, Italian, Bohemian and Malay (1621).

Outside of the Palatinate, the Heidelberg Catechism was first adopted as a book of instruction in Germany by the congregations of refugees from the Netherlands, the "congregations of the cross," by the Synod of Wesel, 1568, and of Emden, 1571, and thus it found its way into East-Friesland, where a'Lasco's catechism had been used. Then it was adopted by the Reformed congregations on the Lower Rhine (Julich-Cleve-Berg, Mark, etc.*), in which in accordance with

* The first Synod of Berg was held in the parsonage at Neviges. The first paragraph of the minutes is as follows: "After having invoked the name of God, it was unanimously resolved and ordained by this Synod that, as there is among the present ministers perfect

the synodical resolutions adopted in 1576, sermons were preached on it, and after 1586 it was made binding by oath upon pastors and teachers. Nassau and the neighboring dominions adopted it in 1581, Anhalt in 1596. Soon after the year 1600 the catechism was more extensively introduced. In 1613 it found its way into Brandenburg after the elector John Sigismund had embraced the Reformed faith, and thence into the Reformed congregations of the eastern provinces of Prussia. When in 1695 the parochial church of Berlin was built, which was the first Reformed church of the city, there were placed in the corner-stone, besides other documents, a Herborn Bible (translated by the Reformed pastor Piscator) and a Heidelberg Catechism, both bound in black and fastened with large gilded clasps. At the dedication of the Jerusalem church of the city (on Easter Monday, 1708), at which both Reformed and Lutheran ministers officiated, the Heidelberg and the Lutheran Catechisms lay side by side during the service on the communion table, which occupied the place from which the altar had been removed. The cathedral church was originally Reformed, and until the middle of the present century the youth were instructed in the Heidelberg Catechism, and the princes of the house of Hohenzollern were confirmed upon the basis of the same catechism. According to the royal Prussian "Evangelical Reformed Regulations" instituted for the guidance of inspectors, presbyteries, classes, gymnasia and schools, October 24, 1713, which were issued as a "permanent pragmatic law," no Reformed "pastor or teacher" was

accord as to the doctrine of the Word of God, since they have separated themselves from the papal abominations, and hold to the pure doctrine of the Gospel, and in particular to the Heidelberg Catechism, as the doctrine which they find to be absolutely based upon the Word of God."

to be permitted to use any other catechism but this one. In a mandate issued November 9, 1717, by King Frederick William I. he commands:

"That in all Evangelical churches and schools of all my dominions there shall be used and taught no other catechism but the Heidelberg Catechism, to which I myself hold allegiance."

These mandates were not affected by the union introduced into Prussia, since King Frederick William III. expressly declared that the confessional status of the two Churches was not to be changed by the union. The Heidelberg Catechism was adopted in the duchy of Zweibruecken after 1600. In Bremen it had been introduced earlier, for in 1621 it was ordered that it should be made binding upon the ministers by oath. Beginning with 1575, it gradually made its way into Lower Hesse, and was formally adopted there in 1655.

In what was formerly the earldom, but is now the principality of Lippe, in which a change from the Lutheran to the Reformed faith was consummated at the close of the century under the reign of the Reformed count Simon VI., there was adopted in the year 1612 the "*Catechismus Angerii*," printed at Cassel and made up of selections from the Heidelberg Catechism. As early as 1623 it began to be superseded by the Heidelberg Catechism itself. In the Directory of Worship of 1684, which is still binding, it is stated (chap. 8):

"No minister is to be allowed to introduce any other or special catechism, but each one must be faithful to the Heidelberg Catechism, and must present and explain its questions and answers with sufficient clearness to enable all to understand them."

The same is required of the teachers (chap. 13). For this purpose the Commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism prepared by Frederick Adolph Lampe (a native of Detmold) and published under the title, "*The Milk of the Truth*," was diligently used in the last century by ministers and teachers. When in 1781

a normal school was founded at Detmold and an attempt was made by the one party to set aside the Heidelberg Catechism, the sovereign, Count Simon Augustus, to whom all papers pertaining to the matter had to be submitted, published his decision in an autograph manuscript as follows :

“That the Heidelberg Catechism, which has been adopted in this earldom, and upon which all the regulations pertaining to candidates and ministers are based, must be retained, since it especially has become of the highest importance in the midst of the present conflicting world-systems.”

In this century an attempt, which in effect succeeded,* was made to set aside the catechism indirectly as a book of instruction in the schools and for catechetical classes, by introducing a “Guide for Religious Instruction in Schools” (Lemgo 1811). When in 1843 the Consistory directly introduced the “Guide” as a book of instruction in the place of the Heidelberg Catechism, and the regulations pertaining to candidates and ministers were altered accordingly, a struggle began, in which at first only five ministers joined, and which some of the congregations approved and others opposed. It was at that time that a large number of the members of the congregation of Langenholzhausen sold their houses and farms and emigrated to America, rather than give up their Heidelberg Catechism. They still constitute the mainstay of the flourishing Reformed congregation at Franklin, Wisconsin, in whose midst is located a Reformed theological seminary.

*The book was not arranged in catechetical form, but in the form of paragraphs, the first of which is as follows: “When man begins to reflect earnestly upon the world and upon himself, he desires to know who has created all things, for what purpose they were created, how he is to conduct himself, and to what he may look forward if he conducts himself properly.” This was to take the place of “thy only comfort !”

In the year 1856 was reached a crisis that proved favorable to the Heidelberg Catechism. In the regulations for administering the oath of office to candidates and ministers, the old ordinance was restored: "that I will teach nothing but what is in accordance with the writings of the Old and the New Testament and in accordance with the confession of faith based upon them, which is held by the Church reformed according to God's Word, viz., the Heidelberg Catechism." Next the catechism became one of the subjects of agitation on the part of the liberal party in the state, who desired to have it abolished. Here again it was a ministerial order of the sovereign, Prince Leopold III., which diverted the storm and secured for the Heidelberg Catechism the right which belongs to it according to the decrees of the Church.*

The three hundredth anniversary of the Heidelberg Catechism was celebrated by the Reformed people of Germany, July 7-9, 1863, at Detmold, in a conference of Reformed ministers, elders and candidates.†

A few years later the political situation of the country gave rise to another assault upon and defence of the Heidelberg Catechism in the Reichstag, 301 years after the memorable day at Augsburg. The attack was led by a very active democratic agitator, who was a deputy in the Reichstag, and the defence was conducted by Lord von Oheimb, a good Lutheran, at that time minister of Lippe. It was in the session of the North German Reichstag in Berlin, on the 23d day of October, 1867, and the subject under consideration was a complaint from the country concerning certain

* The order of April 30, 1863, which is worthy of special attention, may be found in my *Evangelical Reformed Church Paper*, 1863, p. 167, etc.

† See Acts and Proceedings of the Conference in my *Evangelical Reformed Church Paper*, 1863, page 273, etc.

points of administration. The address of the minister, which at the same time gives us a clear understanding of the progress of the conflict, was, according to the stenographic report, as follows :

“There is a third point, embracing special complaints, against my administration. They pertain to a most serious sphere, and on the other hand a sphere with which, no doubt, in my judgment neither the Federal Council nor the Reichstag can in any way interfere according to the constitution. They pertain to the religious sphere, and in the name of my administration I must protest most earnestly against the Reichstag resolving to refer this matter to the Imperial Chancellor in any form whatever, although I have no reason to fear an investigation of the transactions that have taken place in relation thereto since my administration began. It would take me very far if I were to enter upon the discussion of this complaint, the language of which is as follows :

“‘That the authorities have arbitrarily interfered with our constitutionally established confessional status, in that they have prohibited even under the threat of ecclesiastical punishment those religious books which promote a rational Christianity, and have been in use for more than fifty years, and have forcibly substituted for them against the express will of the schools and the churches, the highly antiquated Heidelberg Catechism of the year 1563, and likewise a hymn book of the same tendency.’

“I say it would take me entirely too far to enter in detail upon a discussion of this point. When I entered upon my office, I found a most violent religious controversy that had lasted for a number of years, and had assumed widespread proportions, requiring immediate adjustment. For my part, I did not seek the controversy, but when I was compelled to take cognizance of it, I entered upon it with all the earnestness and decision the situation demanded, which at that time had assumed such dimensions that in different congregations a state of rebellion existed, and on this account a considerable portion of the ministry and of the membership claimed—basing their claims upon the opinions of eminent authorities in canon law and in theology—that the confessional standing of the Church was suffering. Upon this point I will cite names well known to most of the gentlemen and highly esteemed by them, among others that of

the still living Provost Nitzsch himself, and that of the late Privy Councillor Richter, the eminent professor of canon law. These gentlemen considered the matter of so much importance that they addressed themselves even to the sovereign of the land, and requested that he should extend relief to the distressed condition of the Reformed Church ; and just as I entered into office there was before me a very voluminous complaint based upon such opinions, which I as a layman desired to treat with the greatest care, and as the complaint was directed against the Consistory, I submitted it for a formal opinion to a foreign Church judicatory, the Prussian Consistory at Coblenz. After they had rendered their opinion, I proceeded in the matter according to the obligations which the Church government enjoins, and which according to the Church law in force at my entrance into office, is laid as a duty upon the sovereign of the land, viz., to protect the confessional standing of the Reformed churches of the land in so far as it is in accordance with the Word of God and the Church's special symbol, the Heidelberg Catechism, and not as was done at that time, to withhold the Heidelberg Catechism from the schools."

A recent attempt to modernize the language of the Heidelberg Catechism and, thereby, to alter it materially, may be regarded as abandoned.

Since 1887 there has been prescribed for candidates a six weeks' course in the normal school, and according to direction they are obliged before entering, among other things, "to work out for themselves an outline of the Heidelberg Catechism in detail."

Outside of Germany the catechism was adopted as follows: In 1574 in the Netherlands (at the Synod of Dort), after it had been in use there since 1568; in 1577 it found entrance into Hungary, and was adopted by synodical authority in 1646. At an early period it was introduced into Switzerland, first in the canton of Bern, then in St. Gall and Schaffhausen, and soon in almost all the Reformed cantons. In Poland it soon became the general book of instruction, and was held in high esteem. It is used in the Reformed congrega-

tions of Austria, in Bohemia and Moravia, as well as in Russia. In England, Scotland and France it was not adopted as a book of instruction, but is recognized as a confession of faith.

In the United States of America it was first brought from the Palatinate by German immigrants, who, on account of the persecutions of the catechism by the Catholic electors, escaped with it across the ocean and settled for the most part in Pennsylvania, where to-day yet one meets with many things reminding one of the Palatinate, both in speech and customs. In the Reformed Church of North America it has been adopted both as a confession and as a book of instruction. An Article of the "Constitution of the Reformed Church in the United States" says: "The Heidelberg Catechism is the only book that is accepted as an authoritative expression of the truths taught in the Holy Scriptures, and is acknowledged as the standard of doctrine in the Reformed Church in the United States." "Licentiates" (candidates) obligate themselves when they are licensed as follows (Art. 4): "I hereby testify that I honestly and truly hold the doctrines of the Heidelberg Catechism to be the doctrines revealed to us in the Bible, and promise, moreover, faithfully to preach and defend the same," etc. Likewise "teachers of theology" (professors in the theological seminaries) are required, "at their inauguration, solemnly to affirm the following declaration, as by an oath in the presence of God, in a public assembly" (Art. 19): "You, N—— N——, professor elect of the theological seminary of the Reformed Church in the United States at N——, acknowledge . . . further that the doctrine contained in the Heidelberg Catechism, is the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures. You declare sincerely that in the office you are about to assume, you will make the inviolable divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, and

the truth of the doctrine contained in the Heidelberg Catechism, the basis of all your instructions, and faithfully maintain and defend the same in your preaching and writing, as well as in your instructions," etc. The Tercentenary of the catechism was brilliantly celebrated in the United States in 1863.

In the Reformed Church of South Africa, in Cape Colony and the Transvaal Republic, the Heidelberg Catechism is held in high esteem as a confession of faith and as a book of instruction.

The latest page in the history of the catechism has reached me while I am writing this history. It is the information that in Japan two Reformed denominations, the missionary Churches of the Congregationalists and the Presbyterians, at a synod in Tokio, May, 1887, united upon the basis of the infallible Word of God as contained in the Old and the New Testament and adopted as their symbols the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed, as well as the Westminster and Heidelberg Catechisms.*

We have learned to know the Heidelberg Catechism in its life history of more than 300 years, as teacher, confessor and martyr in behalf of Christianity. We also see it as a missionary among the heathen, even as the old translations into Singalese and Malay were prepared for missionary service in the Dutch Indies, and that into Spanish for similar service in the West Indies. About the middle of this century nearly 30,000 Christians, who had been entirely lost sight of, were discovered on the Sanguir Islands in the Indian Archipelago. There was a vague rumor that on some islands north of the Celebes, which belong to the Dutch, there were three Bibles and a few people that gathered about them. The Netherland Missionary Society sent missionaries

* Quarterly Register of the Alliance of Reformed Churches holding the presbyterian system. No. 8. Oct. 1887.

thither and found the number of Christians that had been reported. The school children wrote on the bark of trees the most beautiful verses of Scripture. Twenty schools and churches were found, but without sacraments. In a short time 3000 adults and children were baptized, as they were found to possess sufficient knowledge of Christian doctrine. And whence had they obtained this knowledge? They were acquainted with the Heidelberg Catechism, probably one of the older translations. It is possible that the earlier missionaries to these islands had lost their lives or had given up the field long ago for different reasons. But one missionary remained and continued his labors under the blessing of God. He was the missionary from Heidelberg. Now others joined him again.

The great enmity of the world to the catechism has often manifested itself, but the rich blessing with which the Lord has attended it in the hearts of believers will not be fully known until the day of the revelation of Jesus Christ from heaven. Then, according to the promise (Matt. 10: 32), He will confess the Heidelberg Catechism, which confessed Him before friend and foe. And the catechism can truly say with St. Paul: "Having, therefore, obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles."

II.

THE REFORMED METHOD OF CATECHIZING.

It is often said that the Heidelberg Catechism is not adapted as a book of instruction to the wants of either teachers or pupils ; that it is too difficult to learn and to teach. But when the objection is thoroughly sifted, there remains nothing for it to rest upon except the length of the answers to some of the questions in the Catechism, and to silence it altogether, let us look back three hundred years and consider the low grade of intelligence among the people, the length of the school term, limited to the winter months, the lack of compulsory education, the few branches taught, and the meagre knowledge of the best teachers of the common schools, who lacked utterly in professional training. In the country the teaching was done by the sextons and bell-ringers, who at the same time followed their trades, while schoolmistresses were provided for the girls. Yet these simple but earnest-minded people, under the guidance of their pastors and with the help of God, advanced the people's knowledge of the Scriptures to such an extent that after the Catechism had been in use fifty years, the Electoral Palatinate delegates to the Synod of Dort joyfully declared that among them the words of the prophet Joel had been fulfilled of late years : "And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions" (Joel 1 : 28). To-day, when systematic instruction is more general and of a higher order, and teachers are trained professionally, it should certainly be possible to attain the same success in the use of the Catechism. The multiplication of subjects in the public schools and the wider distribution of interest on the part of the pupils

which it entails, is counterbalanced by the more regular attendance and the greater length of the school term. The religious instruction of the people by the use of the Heidelberg Catechism is greatly facilitated by the clearness and simplicity of the book, so that the contents of the answers need only to be unfolded and illustrated to the pupils. As early as 1585 an attempt was made to remove the difficulty occasioned by the length of some of the answers of the Catechism by the official publication at Heidelberg of a so-called "Smaller Heidelberg Catechism." The preface says: "The purpose of this summary of the larger Heidelberg Catechism is not to introduce a new catechism, or to supersede the larger one, which explains in detail the chief articles of Christian doctrine . . . But as some questions of the larger catechism may be too long and others too difficult for plain and simple people and growing youth, we have prepared this summary or smaller catechism. Especially has the doctrine of the holy sacraments been so set forth from the Word of God in a few questions that it is hoped the unfounded accusations which have been brought against it may be silenced and all fair-minded persons satisfied, while the plain people and the youth will find in it a helpful guide in Christian doctrine until they are prepared to take up the larger catechism."

This summary was to serve also only as a preparation for the larger catechism. While on the one hand it was a simplification, yet it served to make the later instruction more difficult, because the abridgment of the summary made different forms of expression necessary, which confused the children when they came to learn the unabridged questions of the larger catechism. And after all the two books were different, which was found to be a drawback in committing the answers, since the memory of children is local rather than logical.

The same end was sought to be gained by the Synod of Dort, in a resolution adopted at its 17th session (Nov. 30, 1618). The teachers were directed not only to drill their classes at least twice a week in memorizing, but were also to explain the fundamental doctrines of the catechism, dividing the pupils into three sections according to their age and capacity. In the first the chief articles (the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Institution of the Sacraments and the requirements of Church Discipline), together with a few short prayers, were to be learned and explained by the use of very brief questions relating to the three parts of the catechism; in the second the smaller catechism was to be used, and in the third section, composed of those advanced in years and in understanding, the larger Heidelberg Catechism was to be used. This resolution, however, was not carried out in the Netherlands.* The "Kort Begrip," a brief summary of the catechism, was prepared later.

In the present century also a summary was attempted, in which thirty-six of the most important questions are given a place, without abridgment or division, covering the entire ground of the catechism, for use in the schools and in the instruction of catechumens. This plan would certainly be preferable to the other two, were it not for one serious consideration. The Reformed Church, unlike the Lutheran Church, has but one brief and simple confession of faith, viz., the Heidelberg Catechism, which can be placed into the hands of every church member, while the Lutheran Church has at least six, some of which are quite voluminous, and this plan would soon drive the catechism from the homes of the people and leave only the abridged form.

* Gisb. Voetius Tract. sel de polit. ecclesiast. Ser. II., p. 309. Amsterdam, 1887.

The simplest way is indicated already in the earlier editions of the catechism, in which eighty-one questions are marked with a *. In accordance with this arrangement the entire catechism was to be taught only in the four electoral colleges; in the ordinary schools only these eighty-one questions were to be used, while in the primary schools the explanation of twenty-two questions was considered sufficient. With this number and with this selection of questions agree in general the regulations for the common schools of Lippe, issued October 18, 1873, according to which eighty-two questions are to be taught and explained in the schools, while the doctrine of the sacraments and the other unmarked questions are reserved for the catechetical instruction preparatory to confirmation. Instruction in the catechism is begun in the middle grades of the schools, for which thirty-two questions are designated with **, and the remaining fifty, marked with a single *, are added in the upper grades. These designations are retained in this commentary. The instruction in the catechism assigned to the schools is completed in the upper grades, from which children at the age of thirteen years enter upon instruction preparatory to confirmation, so that the schools work hand in hand with the Church.

Soon after the selection of these eighty-one questions, there appeared an admirable book of instruction* upon the same, in which both the theoretical and the practical sides received proper treatment. The old Reformed method of catechization, with its gratifying results, was based upon this guide. According to it, "the words of the text of the catechism, as well as some other subjects which might be obscure to the minds of the children, are to be first explained." Then "the contents of each question are to be vividly set

* A copy of which, published in 1619, is lying before me.

forth in very few words, rendering the understanding of the entire question quite easy." Then the answers are to be analyzed, their Scripture proofs cited, and both are to be explained. Finally "the children are to be drilled in the catechism" by the answers which they can frame out of the words of the catechism. "When," says the conclusion, "teachers and school-mistresses diligently instruct the youth in the catechism, according to this method and under the guidance of their pastors, we may confidently expect that these will obtain a fair knowledge of the fundamental principles of the Christian religion to the joy of their own and of their parents' hearts. This method of catechizing has been tried in several schools of this kind, and it was found to be easy, even after it had been in use only a short time. And they will discover further that by instructing their children in this way, they themselves will increase more and more in their knowledge of the Christian religion and in true piety. . . . May our faithful God pour out His holy Spirit, in accordance with His promise, in rich measure upon our children that they may truly know and honor Him, be able to overcome the evil one, and thus become heirs of eternal life, through Jesus Christ, in whom all God's promises are yea and amen. Amen. Amen."

The introductory directions cover fourteen pages; then follows the catechism; after which, in an appendix of fifty-two pages, illustrations of the method of procedure are given with individual questions.

According to this guide catechetical training is divided into two parts: "Instruction" and "Exercises." "Instruction" is provided for three grades. It is not to be denied that the method is somewhat

mechanical; but it was the only guide accessible to the untrained catechists, and it was not only found necessary to repeat what was to be impressed upon the understanding, but a second part, called "Exercises," was found serviceable. By changing the form of the questions, the children were to be "drilled" to answer intelligently by using the words of the answers in the catechism. In this way it was hoped to prevent merely mechanical work on the part of both teachers and pupils.

A guide to the "Exercises" is furnished in the practical examples which are given.

By these "Exercises" on the one hand the children are to be brought to reflection, and their knowledge of the truth is to be made more clear and firm, while on the other hand the teachers will have the opportunity to gather from the answers what has been apprehended and what may need further explanation.

In these times there is a disposition to speak disparagingly of this method, which in its essentials has held its place as the mode of catechetical instruction in the schools to this day, as scholastic. But it must be acknowledged in the main as the correct system, not only because its success has proved it to be so, but also because it is adapted to the relation of the schools to catechetical instruction. The chief ends of the latter are to be secured by the minister when he prepares his catechumens for confirmation, and the work of the school is to be looked upon as preparatory to this work. The Heidelberg Catechism makes this work very easy, and, besides its systematic structure, it has a great advantage over Luther's Smaller Catechism in that the material of the instruction need not first be supplied by the teacher, but is furnished in rich measure and in systematic form by the answers of the cate-

chism itself; and to give the children a clear understanding of it, that which they have already committed to memory needs only to be analyzed and explained.* On the other hand the child, after having committed so much to memory, has this advantage that it will not forget the explanations of the several doctrines so readily as when these are given orally, which must be done when the Lutheran Catechism is used. And lastly, this method not only makes the work easier for the schools, but affords a certain guarantee to the Church that nothing can easily be introduced into catechetical instruction that is contrary to the doctrines which are based upon the Word of God, and which are supported by proof texts of the same.†

In the light of my experience, during forty-one years of service (1891) in church work and in schools, and as the result of my own catechetical efforts, and of my observations in visiting schools in which the teachers have adhered to the traditional system, I would recommend the following methods of procedure. This commentary furnishes the requisite material for this purpose.

* Nitzsch (Practical Theology, vol. II.) says that the Heidelberg Catechism is an admirably organized structure, since it is more than a collection of material for a catechism, while Luther's Smaller Catechism is more of a collection of "building material" than a structure.

† Gisbert Voetius, l. c. p. 309, decidedly commits himself to this method, which has maintained itself, although in his day also other methods were tried which served rather to darken and confuse the understanding than to enlighten it. When any one says that a number of the questions of our catechism, such as 1, 26, 60, and others, are too long and not adapted to pupils that are not advanced, I answer that it is the part of the work of catechization to separate these questions into their proper parts and to direct the children to frame the corresponding answers out of the text of the catechism, and that this method must be continued until the children have thoroughly mastered them.

1) Let the teacher himself read clearly and correctly the questions to be committed to memory at the time he assigns them, then let one or two of the children read them in the same way; and for the sake of making the memorizing easier, let the teacher explain special expressions or constructions which are unfamiliar to the children. This will require but little time if the teacher confines himself to the purpose for which he makes explanation.

2) When the questions are to be explained, let them first be recited, together with the proof texts, by a number of children. Let the teachers see to it that what has been committed to memory be neither drawled out nor declaimed, but that in a simple way only the principal words be emphasized. "Aufbeten" (to speak as one would a prayer) is the expression that was used by our forefathers and that is still in use in some localities. Then let the explanation take the following course:

a) When it is necessary, as is frequently the case, the answer is only the completion of the question of the catechist framed in such a way that the gist of the question of the catechism may be brought out in a brief answer.

b) The answer of the catechism is then separated into its parts, so that the children may be led to frame their answers to the questions addressed to them out of the text of the catechism.

c) Next the parts of the answer of the catechism are to be explained in such a way that the teacher himself will introduce the new matter and will at the same time bring to the recollection of the children, by means of questions, what they have already learned. The teacher, however, needs to guard against falling into the habit of using merely dry definitions, as was the case in the time of Dinter. The catechism was not prepared as a mere manual of memory exercises.

d) In connection with each part Scripture proofs pertaining to it are to be cited, and, if necessary, briefly explained (which has been kept in view throughout this commentary). These, however, are not intended to explain but to prove the different statements. According to the fundamental principle of our Church, reformed according to the Word of God, the purpose of these Scripture passages is to show how fully the doctrines of the catechism are in accord with the Scriptures. When a familiar example from Biblical history, or from life, or a proverb can be introduced naturally to illustrate a point, it is to be done to make the instruction more animated. It is not well, however, to expand illustrations in all their fulness and detail, as this would take too much time and would interrupt the continuity of the instruction itself. They ought to be restricted to the point in hand. It is a very undesirable method to have the text of the catechism rehearsed without analysis and to have it followed by a bare recital of the proof texts. Such a course indicates that the teacher lacks both in industry and skill.

3) In the last place, what has been explained is to be briefly reviewed. The same is to be done at the opening of the next lesson, in order to keep up the connection with what follows. For instruction in the catechism must not be, at least in the upper grades, disconnected, but systematic.

Catechetical instruction is to be given in the middle and upper grades of the school, while Bible history begins in the lower grade, and is continued in the other two grades together with the catechism. In the middle grade, when one teacher gives the instruction in the three grades by himself, he may attach the explanation of particular questions of the catechism to the study of different events in Bible history without

assigning a separate hour to instruct in the catechism.* In the upper grade most of the time set apart for religious instruction is devoted to the catechism. How far the work is to be carried and what particular principles of catechetical instruction are to be applied at different times, must be decided by the teacher himself in the light of his normal training, and must be learned in part by experience.

In the light of my own experience I can assure any one who 1) prepares himself thoroughly for catechetical instruction, 2) follows the above method, 3) keeps within proper bounds, that he will be able, by the help of God, to advance the children entrusted to him in the knowledge of the catechism, according to their several gifts and capacities, as far as it is necessary and possible. One thing more. Religious instruction in the schools is not only to open the understanding to an apprehension of the truth revealed in God's saving Word, as this is apprehended in the questions of the catechism, but also to secure its experience in the heart. Only what proceeds from the heart reaches the heart, and such believing Christian experience is presupposed in all the questions of the Heidelberg Catechism. One is properly prepared, therefore, only when that preparation is prayerfully made, and then the exercises of the catechism will also be edifying. The apostle James also gives good advice which is applicable to catechists (James 1: 5): "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

* In the course of instruction assigned for the schools of Lippe, Nov. 18, 1873, part 2, twenty-one historical incidents from the Old Testament and twenty-eight from the New are indicated, together with appropriate questions from the catechism for instruction in the middle grade.

As it is within the province of the schools to teach the catechism in preparation for the church, so in turn it is the duty of the church and the home to co-operate with the schools. Only where these three factors work in hearty unanimity can the true end of religious instruction be attained. This was kept prominently in view when the Heidelberg Catechism was introduced, and accounts for the early reputation of the adherents of the Reformed faith, that both old and young were firmly established in the knowledge of saving truth, and though much persecuted, were willing and able to defend their faith. They provided for the furtherance and confirmation of their people in the knowledge of Christian truth by means of catechetical instruction in the schools, catechetical instruction and sermons on the catechism in the church, and by home training.

In the beginning neither a certain age nor a particular day of the year was fixed for the admission or confirmation of the youth. According to the Palatinate Directory of Worship of 1563 (in the chapter on "Preparation for the Holy Communion"*) after the celebration of the Lord's Supper has been announced to the congregation from the pulpit eight days in advance,

"The minister shall admonish parents and heads of families to instruct during the week children and other youths (their servants) whom they wished to bring to the table of the Lord for the first time, and on the following Saturday (at the preparatory service) or at an earlier day of the week (at the mid-week service),

* The Lord's Supper shall be celebrated in the cities at least every month, in the towns every two months, and at Easter, Whitsunday and Christmas. When it seems to be necessary for the edification of the congregation, or the custom of the church requires it, it is right and proper that it should be observed more frequently. But whenever the communion is to be celebrated, it shall invariably be announced to the congregation by the minister eight days in advance, with the admonition that the entire congregation shall prepare itself for it.

as the needs of the church required, they were to be brought to the minister after the sermon for further advice."

After the preparatory service

"The minister shall take his place before the communion table, and first of all shall admonish the young people present who had never communed before, to present themselves in order to make confession of their faith. Then the minister shall require those who have presented themselves to recite first the articles of the Creed, the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Supper. But as some, on account of their timidity, may not be able to repeat these articles word for word, who are in other respects blameless in their lives, the minister shall remind them of the chief articles of the Christian faith, and after this confession has been made, they shall be admitted with the congregation to the Lord's table."

The Palatinate Directory of Worship gives the following directions concerning catechetical instruction and sermons on the catechism.*

"Every Lord's Day afternoon at the hour most convenient a sermon shall be preached on the catechism. Where two sermons are preached in the afternoon, as is the case in the cities, after the singing of the hymn, God's blessing shall be invoked that His Word may be rightly understood, after which the summary of the catechism, together with the proof texts of the five principal parts shall be distinctly read to the congregation at the beginning of the sermon in the order in which they are arranged. And several questions of the twenty following these parts shall be explained for half an hour. After the sermon the youth shall be examined and shall be dismissed with a prayer and benediction and sent home. In the second sermon, preached later in the day, the catechism and the chief points of Christian doctrine which it embraces shall be explained more fully and exhaustively to the adult portion of the congregation. The service shall be opened as usual with an invocation, singing and prayer, after which a Scripture passage relating to the subject to be presented, together with the questions of the catechism which are to be expounded, shall be read and intelligently explained. The service shall be closed with the prayer following the lesson, which is specially provided for use with the catechism ("The

* Richter's edition, the Evangelical Church directories of the sixteenth century, Weimar, II., 260, not reprinted in full.

prayer after the sermon on the catechism"). In the country and in towns where but one sermon is preached in the afternoon, the minister, after the bell has been rung a second time for service, shall examine and catechize the youth before the sermon, and when he is through, the bell shall be rung a third time, that the whole congregation may be gathered. Then, after the singing and prayer, the summary of the catechism shall be read, after which several questions shall be explained for half an hour; then those called forward shall be kindly and considerately examined and instructed in the fundamental truths of salvation, and finally the service shall be closed with the usual prayer."—"In the cities the Sunday afternoon sermons shall cover the entire catechism once a year."

Regulations with reference to catechetical instruction and sermons on the catechism similar to those prescribed by the Palatinate Directory of Worship were instituted in all the Reformed churches of Germany.

At the Synod of Dort (15th session) the delegates of East Friesland (the pastors Eilshemius and Grimershemius of Emden) describe the catechetical arrangements that prevailed among them in the following manner: The schoolmasters are required to subscribe their names to a solemn agreement, that along with the other duties of their office they will devote themselves earnestly to catechetical instruction, and will diligently prosecute it with their scholars. The pastors, elders and school inspectors, therefore, make quarterly visits to the schools of their congregations, to assure themselves of the industry of the teachers and of the progress of the scholars in the knowledge of the catechism. On Sunday afternoon the schoolmasters bring their scholars regularly to the church service. The boys five and six years of age repeat the principal parts and questions of the catechism. Other scholars to the number of thirty or forty recite from memory the questions which are to be explained in the sermon. When the children are dismissed from school, pious parents are in-

the habit of going over the catechism with them, especially on the evening of festival days, and in order that they may not forget it, they make them recite it. When youths and maidens, as well as adults, are admitted to the Lord's Supper, they are publicly examined in the catechism in the presence of the entire congregation, and they recite the same from memory, except the timid ones, who are examined privately. The minister who conducts the catechetical instruction, after prayer, himself quotes the five principal parts, after which the boys and girls recite the questions that are to be explained. The explanation, which is brief and comprehensive, is followed by an edifying application.. The catechism is gone over every six months, and in their annual pastoral visits the ministers admonish all their members, both young and old, to persevere faithfully in their study of the catechism.

The Directory of Worship of Lippe of 1684, chapter VIII., gives detailed directions "concerning catechization and how the same is to be conducted."

"As catechization which is founded upon the Word of God, and confirmed by the practice of the Church, is, according to the experience of all ages, a very important part of the office of the Christian ministry, so that without the same very little fruit can be expected from the preaching of the pulpit, because the hearers who have not been instructed and have no knowledge of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, understand very little of what is preached to them, but continue in gross ignorance and unbelief; not only in the schools, but also in the churches of these dominions, catechization shall be prosecuted with the greatest earnestness by the ministers, and where it is not yet introduced, it shall be introduced without delay, and shall be cultivated no less assiduously than the preaching of the Word, in order that by this blessed means they may diligently and faithfully instruct not only the youth, but also adults who are without a knowledge of the chief doctrines of the Christian faith, and bring them to a true knowledge of God in Christ, and to Christian, God-fearing life and conduct.

“To this end parents, fathers and mothers, shall not only admonish and urge their children and servants with all earnestness, but are also to go before them in the way of example, so that young and old will attend as often and as faithfully as possible catechetical instruction in the church.

“Catechization shall be conducted in the following manner: the minister in his place after having preached on the Lord’s Day a sermon on the catechism, shall politely invite the youth into the choir or some other suitable place in the church, that he may examine them and thus ascertain what they have learned of Christian doctrine from the sermon, or in school or from their parents.*

“In congregations in the country, where during the winter on account of the shortness of the days no afternoon sermon is preached, the minister shall nevertheless catechize in the afternoon the older youths, especially those who desire to be admitted to the Lord’s Supper in the near future.†

“In large and extensive parishes the children shall be divided into classes for catechetical instruction on Sunday. These classes shall recite the catechism in turn, but all shall be required to be present and to listen. A roll shall be kept and in cases of absence the parents shall be earnestly admonished.

* This regulation is in accord with the resolution adopted by the Synod of Dort at the conclusion of its deliberations upon catechetical instruction (sessions 114–117, Nov. 27–30, 1618): “In order that the Christian youths from their earliest years may be instructed with the utmost care in the fundamental doctrines of religion, threefold catechetical instruction shall be observed: in the home by the parents, in the schools by the teachers, in the churches by the ministers and elders. Accordingly parents are to instruct their children and servants at home in the primary truths of Christian doctrine, shall frequently urge them to prayer and the fear of God, shall take them with them to church, especially to the sermons on the catechism, shall review these sermons with them at home, and shall require them to commit to memory important Scriptural passages.”

† In the Directory of Worship, chap. X., p. 7, it is stated: “Such confirmation of catechumens shall take place twice a year on the Sunday preceding the semi annual fast-days (Good Friday and the fast-day in September), as may be most agreeable or suitable.”

“ In their catechetical instruction the ministers shall proceed carefully, and as spiritual fathers shall not only deal kindly and gently, yet earnestly when necessary, with the catechumens, but also in all their questions and instruction shall have regard for the capacity, age and understanding of their catechumens.

“ The catechization shall proceed according to the order and divisions of the Heidelberg Catechism, so that the questions and answers, which are to be treated in the sermon, shall be used afterward in the catechization, and whenever possible the entire catechism shall be covered every year.

“ No minister shall be allowed to introduce a new or special catechism, but each one must retain the Heidelberg Catechism, and must explain its questions and answers with sufficient simplicity to enable all to understand them.

“ The catechization shall aim not only to impart a knowledge of the truth to the catechumens, but also to exhibit with the utmost clearness the power and beauty of true godliness which is embraced in every fundamental article of the Christian faith.

“ Besides, every preacher shall, after having preached a sermon, hold catechetical instruction on other days of the week, or at other suitable hours, either in the church or in his own house, which shall be attended by all children who can conveniently do so.”

If the Heidelberg Catechism is ever to bring its richest blessings again into our Reformed congregations, and the ancient loyalty to Scripture is to regain its supremacy, the schools, the Church and the family must co-operate in every way possible and with the greatest earnestness to re-establish faithful catechetical instruction, and the Reformed method of catechizing must be revived.

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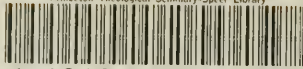
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